



ROBERT MANNING  
STROZIER LIBRARY



Tallahassee

FLORIDA STATE  
UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

JUN 3 2009

TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA





PERSONALITIES  
AND  
REMINISCENCES  
OF THE WAR



# PERSONALITIES AND REMINISCENCES OF THE WAR

BY  
ROBERT LEE BULLARD  
MAJOR GENERAL, U. S. A., *Retired*



GARDEN CITY                      NEW YORK  
DOUBLEDAY, PAGE & COMPANY  
1925

SOC  
D  
570  
B8  
C

**Robert Manning Strozier Library**

**SEP 27 1976**

**Tallahassee, Florida**

**COPYRIGHT, 1925, BY DOUBLEDAY, PAGE  
& COMPANY. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.  
PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES AT THE  
COUNTRY LIFE PRESS, GARDEN CITY, N. Y.**

**FIRST EDITION**

## AUTHOR'S NOTE

*As these are personal memories or experiences, the pronoun "I" can never be out of sight. I am not offering these memories as absolute fact, but as my impression and belief at the time.*

R. L. BULLARD.





## PREFACE

THESE are my memories of the World War. They are not made from "the records." They are truly memories—memories recalled, as all memories are, by a word, a thought, a chance sound or a sight, a whiff of air—anything. They are not offered as history. Though sometimes stirred by others' suggestions, they are my own. Begun in the hope of causing no heart-burnings or controversies, in the end this hope has been abandoned for the larger consideration of trying to give to my countrymen a juster understanding than they seem ever to have had of our part in any other foreign war that we have ever waged. Records! I had no time to gather them. All my thought and effort had to be given to the duty of the hour: before the armistice facing the enemy, after the armistice preserving discipline and morale in our own army.

R. L. B.



## CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE MEXICAN BORDER . . . . .	1
II. GENERAL WOOD AND THE TRAINING CAMPS	8
III. AT THE WAR DEPARTMENT . . . . .	20
IV. THE VOYAGE TO FRANCE . . . . .	32
V. PERSHING . . . . .	41
VI. FIRST ACQUAINTANCE WITH THE FRENCH .	52
VII. THE SCHOOLS IN FRANCE . . . . .	59
VIII. THE ORGANIZATION OF THE A. E. F. . . .	73
IX. AUTUMN, 1917—A PERIOD OF DEPRESSION .	78
X. IN COMMAND OF THE 1ST DIVISION . . .	93
XI. TRAINING IN FRANCE . . . . .	100
XII. SUMMERALL . . . . .	110
XIII. UNDER THE FRENCH IN LORRAINE . . .	115
XIV. INTO THE LINE . . . . .	126
XV. PATROLLING AND RAIDING . . . . .	146
XVI. TRENCH LIFE . . . . .	153
XVII. THE MARCH OFFENSIVE . . . . .	164
XVIII. RELIEF FROM THE QUIET SECTOR . . .	174
XIX. OFF TO THE BATTLE FRONT . . . . .	177
XX. MESNIL-SAINT FIRMIN . . . . .	186

CHAPTER	PAGE
XXI. CANTIGNY . . . . .	192
XXII. ON THE WEST LEG OF THE CHÂTEAU- THIERRY SALIENT . . . . .	202
XXIII. SOISSONS . . . . .	212
XXIV. ACROSS THE SALIENT . . . . .	225
XXV. THE FRENCH MORALE . . . . .	239
XXVI. BEYOND THE VESLE . . . . .	246
XXVII. SOUILLY AND RAMPONT . . . . .	258
XXVIII. THE MEUSE-ARGONNE . . . . .	264
XXIX. THE SECOND ARMY . . . . .	282
XXX. THE 92ND DIVISION . . . . .	291
XXXI. THE ATTACK OF THE SECOND ARMY . . . . .	299
XXXII. THE ARMISTICE . . . . .	307
XXXIII. AFTER THE ARMISTICE . . . . .	316
XXXIV. HOME . . . . .	328
INDEX . . . . .	339

PERSONALITIES  
AND  
REMINISCENCES  
OF THE WAR





# PERSONALITIES AND REMINISCENCES OF THE WAR

## CHAPTER I

### THE MEXICAN BORDER

WHEN the war came I was on the Mexican border. There I first ran into German hostility, indirectly applied through Mexicans it is true, but none the less German hostility. Practically ever since 1911, in consequence of the revolution and disorder in Mexico, the attention of the United States regular army had been drawn toward the border. In proportion as the danger of war between the United States and Germany developed, the activity of Mexican raiders and threats on our border increased. To meet these conditions, the bulk of our National Guard was ordered there in the summer of 1916; and the Pershing punitive expedition was ordered across the border in pursuit of raiding Mexican bands under Villa. These demonstrations kept down open hostilities, but during the rest of 1916 and the first few months of 1917 German propagandists were plainly at work, both in the interior of Mexico and along the border, stirring up trouble for the United States and trying to create a diversion that would keep us occupied on our own side of the world—and thus prevent our effectual entrance into the European war.

## 2 PERSONALITIES AND REMINISCENCES OF THE WAR

Nor were all the efforts on the Mexican side of the frontier. On April 30, 1916, nearly a year before war was declared, I wrote in my diary:

“Upon threat of disagreement with Germany it has become evident of late that the Nation would have to begin by protecting itself against internal enemies.”

A few days after war was declared (April 10, 1917), my diary reads:

“Personally I have taken secret precautions against German spies and treachery, both in my command and hereabouts [Texas-Mexican border], placing watches upon doubtful characters and scattering observers over the country. After I had done so I received orders to do so. It looks as though the great American public, by its own motion, without direction or authority from the Government, has forestalled any German treachery inside our own country. If so, it would be a wonderful result.”

This, happily, turned out to be true.

The demobilization of the National Guard began in 1916 and continued without apparent hesitation even after war with Germany was practically certain—early in 1917. This caused much wonderment in the minds of many lower officers both in the National Guard and in the regular army, to whose unaccustomed eyes the force being demobilized seemed tremendous. Especially did the demobilization puzzle those who felt that the threat on the Mexican border had been used by the President as an opportunity for preparation for the European war.

Considering that President Wilson never changed his policy with regard to Mexico, that Mexico's past history had been full of aggressions and raids upon us,

considering the President's known pacific policy toward Germany, and considering that long before he changed his views with regard to preparedness he had ordered into Mexico and then ordered out both the Vera Cruz Expedition of 1915 and General Pershing's punitive expedition of 1916, without visible results, it seems probable that in the mobilization of the National Guard on the border in 1916, the President never really contemplated anything more than what he said—the defence of our territory, not preparation for war with Germany.

Moreover, large as it seemed then, the Mexican mobilization was neither of a size nor character to prepare for a European war. Yet its effect was not altogether lost; we know now that it helped to train and prepare many officers and non-commissioned officers who afterward in the great mobilization were found at least partially ready to take hold and help the wholly untrained. The force assembled along the border formed the largest body of American troops that had been got together since the Spanish War. My observation of these troops, few as they were, judged by the standards of the World War, gave me some indications of the strength and the weaknesses likely to develop in an American army.

It was reassuring, as to the behaviour and discipline of American soldiers as found in the National Guard. There were certain kinds of essential soldier work, such as cooking, kitchen police, and the care of animals and means of transportation, to which they were quite averse, and which they could hardly be made to do. But in marked contrast to our experience with irregular troops (both National Guard and volunteers) in the

#### 4 PERSONALITIES AND REMINISCENCES OF THE WAR

Spanish-American War, it had been possible to control them, drill them and have them observe the necessary rules of sanitation in camp and on the march. All of them had shown an extremely lively interest and zest in the larger troop manœuvres and field exercises. Mutinies, violent outbreaks, defiance of superior orders, feuds and fights between organizations there had been none, or practically none, in the Mexican Border mobilization. Also, these troops were wrought into coherent units. "A week ago to-day [Diary, August 25, 1916] a tropical wind and rainstorm broke on this camp. We had received the weather warnings of its coming. My orders held all organizations together in camp trying to save the camp and the property, until this was useless; then, throwing down the remaining tents, we marched out by organization, late in the afternoon, to occupy for the night public buildings in the town. The thing was done in fine order in the midst of one of the worst storms I ever saw. All 'phone and telegraph wires in all directions out of this region failed." Again a railroad strike was threatened; we had food on hand in the depot for only two weeks. I at once put the whole command on half rations until I could know that we would not be cut off from the outside supply. It was accepted. Plainly, very plainly, the average American citizen, as typified in these citizen-soldiers, had not forgotten the evil results of his wilfulness and indiscipline in the great camps of the Spanish-American War. And as to sobriety, the result was all that could be expected. We had in the New York troops, under General O'Ryan, the first case that I ever saw of effective "prohibition" for soldiers.

In some cases the small regular regiments had long

been widely scattered in very small detachments guarding the isolated border ranches, settlements and villages. This service had developed the few engaged to a most astonishing degree. With the feeling of self-reliance and sense of responsibility, the private became fit to be a non-com., and the N. C. O. fit to be an officer. The last I saw of a careless, happy-go-lucky orderly that I had upon this service, he was the responsible first sergeant of a company of 250 fighting men in France.

In the prospect of war that was ahead of us, there was to me another reassuring feature in this mobilization of the National Guard on the border. Upon being called to the colours, the men of the Guard had hoped for and expected immediate active service; instead, there was month after month of monotonous life and elementary drill in remote camps, far from home, out of sight of the world and the encouragement of public recognition, under tropical sun in a land of dust, storms, and deserts. The men became inexpressibly tired, weary of military service. Yet the prospect of war immediately re-awakened their enthusiasm. It was a good sign.

Quite disturbing to the military mind were two things of basic nature and import which stood forth on the border at different times during the two or three years preceding our entry into the World War, and which if carried over into the war would mean first confusion and then disaster. These things were thoroughly impressed upon my mind at the time. With me they were of ill omen; they constituted a genuine great fear for the future of military service in either peace or war.

The first was the exercise of command in the field as exemplified during a large part of the time on the



border. From the mouth of the Rio Grande along the whole border to San Diego on the Pacific there were, for long, always two and sometimes three separate and independent commands attempting to do the same thing on the same ground at the same time. It is enough to state the fact; no comment is necessary. This, it was said at the time, was the plan coming from the office of the Chief of Staff of the Army at that time and at the time of our entry into the war—the product of the brain of a late department commander of this region. It had fortunately disappeared from the lower Rio Grande region before our entry into the war, but it remained as a disturbing thought to military minds as a style of command to which we might return if war came.

The second was the movement of the troops to the border and their placing in camp and under command. These operations showed no whit of improvement over the like work in the Spanish-American War eighteen years before. It was indeed something to make a soldier weep. Commanders of troops arriving knew not whither they were going. Commanders to whom they were coming knew not, in many cases, that the troops were coming or when or how or whither they were to go. Most of the information—and always the first information—reaching these officers on this subject came from railroad employees, an engineer or a station agent! The General Staff of the Army had at that time been in existence some fifteen years, and had made studies of such troop movements and even of this very movement to the Mexican border. They had planned and executed with great smoothness a like troop movement to Cuba in 1906; and it is incredible that they



had anything to do with this movement to the border in 1916. There is but one conceivable conclusion; it is that the General Staff had in this matter been ignored or disregarded, and that we had obstinately returned to the rotten, inefficient system and methods of the days of the Spanish-American War.

## CHAPTER II

### GENERAL WOOD AND THE TRAINING CAMPS

WHEREVER in these memories I come to a man who played an important part in the war, especially if he be one whom I had known long ago in the army, I shall stop long enough to tell my readers what I know of him.

Little as I liked the assignment to a training camp, which was my first duty after the war began, I had nevertheless, the greatest respect for the originator of the camp-school idea, General Leonard Wood. He has always been a way-breaker, a doer of unusual and remarkable things.

When as a young lieutenant I joined my company in the Geronimo campaign near the Mexican border in 1885, my captain was commenting upon the exploit of a young medical officer in bringing important dispatches through this wild country infested with Indians and outlaws. It was a Doctor Wood who had done this, practically alone, riding a mule. After that in the Geronimo campaign we heard as much of Doctor Wood as of General Lawton, the principal pursuer and, finally, the captor of Geronimo. Twice in Mexico while hunting Geronimo the little command to which I belonged crossed that in which Doctor Wood served on the same work. Neither time did I see him, for both times he was alone leading Apache scouts and trailers on distant searches

for the trail of the hostile band. He was plainly the important man of the expedition, the man on whom General Lawton relied, and about whom all his officers and soldiers talked.

A few years later at a great watering place on the California coast, I saw him again, now a captain; and noted that his marked personality attracted as much attention as the Commanding General of the United States Army, with whom he then was. Again in a large army post I saw him serving under a veteran of the Civil War, together with many other officers his senior in service and in rank. Nevertheless, he was here also the marked character, the person spoken of, among them all. In Washington later on the army knew of him as one who was able to retain the close friendship of important men who were fighting one another with the utmost hostility—a sign of no mean capacity. Then in the Spanish-American War he attracted the attention and won the lifelong friendship of the great American Theodore Roosevelt. In Cuba the whole world knew of him as a great sanitarian and administrator. In the Philippines, in service among our difficult Mohammedan people, the Moros, I saw him constantly and served under his immediate command in our efforts to extend our control over these turbulent and wholly unusual people. As governor of a Moro district I had to do with him when governor of the Moro state, and also as commander of a military region I served under him when he was commander of the military department.

General Wood is a man of medium stature, yet of such broad build as to suggest stumpiness; with an athletic figure, a rugged countenance, a very scrutinizing but

friendly eye; and plain almost to homeliness. He surrounded himself with personal aides and staff officers who were devoted to him, his service and his ideas. They were always about his business although he never seemed to dictate or be exacting with them; and seemed to follow his lead from his very qualities of leadership. In the various changes of his work in the army these men followed him. Their devotion added greatly to his success and reputation. He was strong, it seemed to me, not so much in his judgments as in his inspiration of men.

There are two means, legal force and personality, by which military men exercise leadership. The first will make a good captain and perhaps even a good colonel; the second is necessary for leadership of any higher degree. This was the quality which characterized General Wood—personality, natural leadership. Men and officers loved to be under and near him in whatever service, whether in camp or garrison, campaign or fight. The soldier, more than any other man, depends for success and contentment upon the recognition of his merit by his superiors. Of all the soldiers under whom I have served, this man was the keenest for the recognition of merit in his subordinates. It could hardly escape his notice, and this bound men and officers to him for ever. Several letters of commendation for expeditions and fights made under his direction or command I hold almost as I do citations for efficiency or bravery from my government. He had a curious way of seeking the opinion of officers serving under his command. Most men would ask you directly for your opinion. Almost always he announced opinions or intentions which apparently he never had, merely

for the purpose of drawing you out and obtaining your opinion. Afterward you would be greatly surprised to see that his announced plans or intentions were never entertained, and that quite different plans, perhaps your own, were adopted.

General Wood in his official work seemed never to be troubled by a spirit of exaction. He was not punctiliously military although he fulfilled all obligations and requirements. He was not what military men would call "cocky," although he was usually well dressed. His own conduct and bearing and his requirements of others seemed to conform to the standard of utility and common sense. He required, not great exactness in the execution of his orders, but the greatest activity and energy. A lack of energy he could never forgive. But his unforgiveness was in no wise personal: he simply dropped the man that failed and had no more official use for him.

"Under no conditions must there now be any fighting of the Moros," came an order to me. Just then a Moro chief defied the authority of the United States. He was under my jurisdiction: I had to fight or he would have triumphed, to the great satisfaction of the hostile Moros and to the demoralization of the friendly Moros round about. I did fight, and it got into the newspapers at once. But the Moro chief was made an example of, to the great profit of the Government. Then came a direction from the General: "Put Bullard in arrest if he doesn't obey my order." A few days later the General himself appeared on the scene. I told him of the circumstances and added with vehemence that no other like conditions would probably now arise; but if they did, there'd be nothing left but to put me



in arrest because I was going to violate his orders and fight. We were riding alone at the time: I can never forget the indulgent smile that the General gave me. He had seen that I had been alive and active, and that sufficed him, although his orders had been disregarded.

If he did not require his subordinates to fulfil his orders to the letter, in his turn he demanded a like liberality from his superiors. To my knowledge, he did not hesitate to go counter to the orders of the President of the United States if conditions of which the President was ignorant required it. He was right.

"Any newspaper correspondents up there?" came a message from him to me in the Moro country at a time when I know he had received general instructions coming from political Washington to have no fighting. "No," I answered. In a few days he was there conducting a punitive expedition against rebellious, marauding Moros who could be handled in no other way.

Throughout his long career I have never known a greater encourager of men who desired to do things. I have never known him to throw cold water upon any scheme which promised beneficial action. Any officer or man who proposed to *do* things had always his sympathy and support. One of the means by which he obtained much work from his subordinates was his good sense in not expecting a man to be able to do everything, but in picking out the man to do any special thing and in recognizing the fact if he did it well. In the various expeditions on which I have observed him, he always had many men and many officers about him. Practically each one of them was a specialist and hard at work at his specialty. And he could be very generous toward each man's peculiarities or failings provided



that man was devoted and up to the notch in his own specialty. Indeed, his strong point was that he could find each man's merit and his use.

Any expedition which General Wood conducted in the Moro country was an expedition for geological, biological, ethnological, religious, and every other kind of research for which he could find a specialist. In passing from one portion of his command to another the distances were great, and they were usually made by steamer. His predecessors covered them in the daytime; but his days were never given to travel, except by land. He made all of his journeys by night and his day found him at the beginning of a day's work and a whole day was given to the work. He was an example in the utilization of time. This statement is not made in praise, it is made in envy.

He had arrived in the Moro country with very little experience of this people. It was hard to keep him out of danger, because no sooner was camp made at the end of a day's march than he had a gun in his hand and was rambling about alone. Or, during the march, he would ride out from the column at great risk to himself, for the Moros were the greatest sneaks and hidiers ever known. They would dog the march of a column all day for the mere chance of grabbing a single stray soldier and capturing his rifle. The General, I believe, owes his life to an alert Filipino, my interpreter, who upon one occasion anticipated the activity of such a lurking Moro near whom the General was passing in one of his strayings from the column. I doubt that the General realized fully his danger or what had happened, but the experienced old Moro fighter, my interpreter, showed a concern that I had never

before seen him demonstrate. I felt quite sure, even if the General did not, that, but for Thomas Torres, the General would have ended his career at the south-east corner of Lake Lanao in Mindanao in 1904—hacked to death by Moro crises.

The Moros of the southern Philippines will always remember General Wood as the man who first told them that slavery must cease. "But," said the Sultan of Sulu, "I shall lose my wives." "Well, Sultan," replied the General, "you have too many anyhow." And so a beginning of the abolition of slavery among the Moros was made with the highest authority—the Sultan himself. Harder was the abolition of the carrying of arms. For this, years and years were to be required, not simply to accomplish the fact but even to make these people accept the idea.

From the days of the Moros I saw General Wood no more till after the outbreak of the World War. He was then engaged in trying to persuade the American people of the folly of their unpreparedness to defend their own country. For his efforts in this direction he had just been severely reproved by our pacifist military authorities who, as well as the American people, became in those days hysterical at the mention of a mere possibility of our having to fight. "That was severe, General," I said. "Yes," he admitted, "I am skating on thin ice, but I am going to skate." And he continued and accomplished the first great step in the preparation of the American people for the war in which we were soon after to join. He established the idea of the Plattsburg Training School for creating the junior officers who would be so greatly needed in case of any war. In the war itself he was destined

to have no part except the making of soldiers and the creating of patriotic sentiment. Nine months later, when our troops were at last effectively entering the war, I saw him in France. "Good-bye," he said, "I am going back to the United States; I shall not be in it."

The first preparations for war in which I was concerned were the training camps for subaltern officers for the army which was to be formed later on by conscription or voluntary enlistment.

"There!" I thought on receiving the detail. "There! My enemies" (I had some) "have 'planted' me for the war. I shall not be in it." I went to my new work in bitterness of heart.

The Plattsburg schools which General Wood had put under way had drawn from all sections of the country active, alert young men of ages from twenty to forty, and had interested the American public in general preparations and in the training of men to take their places as officers in case of need. His efforts had resulted in the formation of a sort of society of the graduates of this Plattsburg camp, and this had spread throughout the nation, carrying the germ of the idea everywhere. When war was declared the Plattsburg idea was seized upon by the War Department as the most practicable and expeditious way of providing officers with some training for war. Fortunately by then the idea had been tried out; it was no longer merely a theory.

The system adopted divided the United States into sections, assigning a training camp of three months to each section, and calling for volunteers to take a course under specially selected and prepared army officers,

who were to teach the same thing in the same way in all camps or schools. I was assigned to take charge of one at Little Rock, Arkansas. Funds had been provided and officers of the Regular Army had been hurriedly assigned to each camp, but hardly had a beginning been made in the establishment of the necessary buildings and tentage before the student officers began to arrive. There was consequently great hurry in opening these camps in time to receive them. It was done, nevertheless, somehow, as much by the efforts of citizens as by the action of the Government. The interest of civilians in the immediate vicinity was most marked and encouraging. Near my camp, business men and commercial clubs, city and county officials, united to help both the officers in charge and the incoming students. Between citizens and Government, the work was done.

In creating these schools, the Government had made a special appeal to the country to obtain men of mature judgment, because they would be the first and the highest ranking among the subordinate officers to form the new army, and it was important that those of highest rank should be men of the best judgment. In the response to this I was struck by the little appreciation that the country still had of its danger. In my own school and, I understand, in almost all the others, young men, almost mere boys, many from the high schools and the lesser colleges, applied for admittance. Great numbers had to be rejected merely on account of youth and lack of physical and mental development. It was evident that the country still regarded the war as boys' work.

However, in some two weeks of effort the schools



were filled with students, among them a son and five other of my relatives—near or distant. Then began a strenuous three months of study and application to physical training. Like cadets at the U. S. Military Academy, the student officers were largely relieved of the usual fatigue work of soldiers, devoting their time to study, care and understanding of their equipment, to drill and to practice in instruction of others less advanced.

The crisis of war never relieved the Government of the necessity for being extremely sensitive to criticism from private persons and influential friends of students who may have thought that the students were not receiving the highest and most punctilious consideration that could be given by the Government. Once accepted, a student officer could not thereafter be expelled from the encampment without the consideration of a board of Regular Army officers carefully recommending and setting forth the causes of their recommendation for his expulsion. In view of the fact that so many of these young men had not yet developed a man's sense of responsibility, this requirement was exceedingly onerous to the officers, few in number, who had been detailed for duty in these camps. Yet it was observed with the utmost care and consideration.

I was impressed with one thing, especially, in the acceptance of these men for the training camps. It was that the army idea of the physical requirements of service was in general infinitely above the civilian idea; It proved later on to be far above the European military idea also. In Europe, all men, the lame, the halt, and the blind, served and had to serve. Yet the high stand-

and we required of student officers brought the country's attention to the need of proper physical development. It has since had a very excellent effect. The intensive work required in these cantonments caused many of the weaklings, those who were unwilling to take the step of speed, to fall by the wayside. It was the first good soldier-training and test of manhood.

In miniature, an officers' training camp brought out clearly the unification and nationalization that was now going on throughout the country. Native and loyal foreigner, Jew and Gentile, Northerner and Southerner, Catholic and Protestant, forgot their differences in the common cause and met with one voice in the encouragement of the coming young officers. It brought out also some of the human cussedness in its own people with which the Government had largely to deal later in the war. Labour, union labour, laying aside all patriotic considerations of the hour, at once began to bully and dictate to other labour and to the Government. They did the work but literally enriched themselves at the very start. In safety at home, far from scenes of carnage through which many of their soldier fellow men had to pass, in wealth and luxury from the high pay which no soldier had, they were to keep up their bullying and dictation during the war and make in their country's hour of need a record of strikes and labour troubles that were a dishonour to the name of America.

After a month of the school, I was called for the first contingent to go to France. The order was a great surprise, so great that for some hours it shocked—benumbed—me with its unexpectedness. My detail to this school at the very beginning of the war I had

taken as a sort of notification by the War Department of its intention to "plant" me, to give me no part in active operations. Then to be called first surprised and puzzled me. Nevertheless, having been for the past four years practically all the time in the field, I was ready, horses and all, and started by the next train.



## CHAPTER III

### AT THE WAR DEPARTMENT

**I**N JUNE I reported in person to General Tasker H. Bliss, Acting Chief of Staff. He was to be the military head of the army and was to direct all its work. A big man, a six-footer, with strong, burly figure, critical, searching eyes, a pugnacious nose and jaw, and a general expression and countenance which he seemed at no pains to make agreeable. His looks seemed to say, "Give an account of yourself, sir." The General seemed preoccupied.

"So far as I know," he said abruptly, "you are the first one of this contingent to report here for duty."

His voice and manner were almost gruff and gave one the idea somehow that he was annoyed at being interrupted. All of my observation of this officer confirms my conviction that he was by nature a student, a man given to his own thoughts, separated very largely from other men about him, and little interested in their works, save as a subject of abstract thought. Things about him seemed to attract his attention very little. He had an absent-minded, far-away look in his eyes whether in the presence of his superiors or his inferiors: indoors or out he seemed absorbed in his own thoughts. "Sit down there," said the General briefly, "and read that." He handed me a copy of a letter of general instructions, directed, as nearly as I can remember, by the President's order to General Pershing, who had

been selected to command the American Expeditionary Forces.

I did as he directed. I have almost no memory of what the instructions were, so general was their nature. My only distinct memory of them is that the widest authority had been given by the President to the Commander-in-Chief of the American Expeditionary Forces. General Bliss evidently had a similar idea, because he commented upon the fact as he conceived it, that General Pershing had already asked the War Department for an enormous number of officers and things. The General snapped this out without any apparent attempt to conceal his views. As he told me of them I wondered that he should think that General Pershing's demands had been too great. They seemed to me small indeed for the undertaking.

I remained for some time in the office of General Bliss while he was giving a number of orders by memoranda to the different departments of the staff. As I listened, I thought that for a Chief of Staff of an army that was destined to become very great, an immense amount of detail was falling to him. The thought worried me, because no one man could carry the details for a great army which this man was then taking up. This was true no matter how able the man. General Bliss I knew to be a man of recognized ability, though not of much real soldierly experience. While in Cuba during our second intervention I had learned of his very efficient work as Treasurer of the Island during our first intervention; and I recalled also a remark of Senator Proctor years ago: "I know a major in the United States Army, Major Bliss, who is competent to be a general officer and to exercise *any* command."

To which I replied: "Well, Mr. Senator, if you think that sufficiently strongly, I am sure he will be a general officer at least." Within six months he was a general officer. I came under his command next in May, 1911, in a small brigade which was formed and placed upon the Mexican border in California at the time of the Madero Revolution, just before the fall of Porfirio Diaz.

General Bliss struck me then as a very persistent student and thinker, but an officer who knew little and cared little for soldiers and soldiering, especially in the field. In the time which I spent, one month, most of it in camp, under his command, I did not see him at all with his troops except during a practice march and manœuvre for a week or ten days. I next saw him in combined manœuvres of the National Guard and the Regular Army, in Connecticut in 1912. These were of the kind known as "controlled manœuvres," by which was meant that every operation was absolutely guided up to a certain lesson and not allowed to be varied from its especial purpose. The General had them come off as planned, although to accomplish this it was necessary to give far-fetched and improbable decisions and orders that strained the imagination to the limit and made troops and commanders dummies. "Let the brigade," he said to me as umpire on one occasion, "halt here, upon this rut of the wagon wheel, not upon that other." The distance apart of two wagon wheels is about three and a half feet. No, man, even with God-like powers, could have accomplished any such result.

While commanding the Southern Department, General Bliss left, or at least there was attributed to him, a curious arrangement of the troops of our Regular

Army placed along the Mexican border to prevent the raids which started in the time of the Madero Revolution in 1911. This was the system as I found it: troops of different arms serving at the same place were under entirely separate commands; where I was serving (and I was informed that the same system extended along the Mexican border from the mouth of the Rio Grande to far beyond El Paso) there were almost always two, and sometimes three, separate and independent commands covering the same thing, on the same ground, at the same time. Such a system could never have been the product of a soldier's mind.

As our Chief or Acting Chief of Staff of our army, as member afterward of a sort of international "strategy board" during the war, and as taking part later in the peace conference, General Bliss must have had much influence upon the initiation, conduct and conclusion of the war so far as America was concerned.

"*June 1st to 5th [Diary]. In Washington. There I studied and learned all I could about the orders and plans for the expedition on which I was detailed to go to France. Of my stay in Washington the great impression left is that if we really have a great war, our War Department will quickly break down. To me it appeared fearfully weak and complicated and centralized.*"

For instance, too many of the details in regard to the division which was soon to go to France were arranged for and ordered by the highest officials of the War Department. "Under such a system, the highest authority would have no time for the higher questions of policy. The conviction made me quite blue about what is likely to happen to us in this war. I left Washington considerably discouraged."



"I found [Diary] the War Department not very busy, certainly not as busy and hard worked as at the outbreak of the Spanish-American War. This has surprised me. Nobody seems very busy or very much worried. I wonder if we are really awake. . . . Well, altogether, I've not been impressed with the business of this War Department. I believe that it will fail in this war: I can see nothing else ahead of it. It seems to me too ponderous (meaning full of detail) in its methods. To-day I, a colonel only, reported in person to two of the highest officers of the War Department for duty. In any effective organization some subordinate would have received me and given me my orders. *I am afraid for our War Department. I believe it will 'fall down' and 'fall down' soon.*"

Such was the impression of four days of observation at the headquarters of war-making authority in the United States. The memory of the confusion and centralization of the days of the Spanish-American War came back upon me, of that war in which a centralized authority found no way whatever to decentralize, but continued to run an army of two or three hundred thousand men with the same arrangements, the same staff, and the same antiquated system as those under which it had been running in time of profound peace an army of 25,000.

Although I hardly dared to state it even in a diary, I felt perfectly sure upon leaving Washington that the headquarters of the army was destined to as great confusion and helplessness in this war as in the last. It apparently so turned out. Before the end of 1917, the head of the Senate Military Committee shocked the country and the troops that had arrived in France

by the statement that "the War Department has ceased to function."

When I was in Washington, the commander for the American Expeditionary Force in France, General Pershing, had been selected, and with his hurriedly gathered staff had already departed for Europe. He had taken with him, I had been told, some sixty or one hundred and sixty officers ( I do not remember which, but whether sixty or one hundred and sixty makes no difference in so far as it concerns this matter.)

In telling me of this number the Acting Chief of Staff, General Bliss, displayed and expressed great irritation at what he apparently believed to be the utterly exorbitant idea and demands of General Pershing for his staff. The same views were shared by the Assistant Chief of Staff. From this it can be easily seen what the War Department at that time really expected this war to be. The staff of the artillery alone of the 1st Army at the battle of the Meuse-Argonne consisted of 150 officers.

While in Washington it was officially intimated to me, a colonel of infantry, that I was to be appointed a brigadier general and assigned to command the 2d Infantry Brigade of the 1st Division and go to France. "I don't care [Diary] three cents about it. This war, if anything at all, will, with its hardships and sacrifices, make the general and the private equal." At a banquet on the Mexican border a month before, on the eve of my departure, which all felt was for the war, speaker after speaker wished me personally great promotion; but the war loomed in such seriousness and magnitude before my mind that the personal factor, I felt, could not be thought of, and I forgot to thank them for their



wishes for my own success and advancement. I finally selected as my adjutant a man who had long been personally disagreeable, even hostile, to me. I did so on account of his efficiency, and never regretted it.

Plans in Washington were evidently very indefinite and for the time being did not seem to go beyond the formation of the first contingent of troops that would go to France—the 1st Division. This doubt and indecision were apparently the normal state of things at Washington. Policies of the Government in most questions had not shown sufficient continuity to make any official feel sure of himself. I heard nothing of any reorganization of the War Department along modern lines in preparation for the war; although an enlargement of the existing organization was expected.

The large independence of the different bureaus of the Department had never ceased after the formation of our General Staff some fifteen years before. It takes something more than a law or a regulation to break down a custom. The General Staff, as had been shown in the mobilization of the Regular Army and National Guard on the Mexican border in 1916, was not yet able to coördinate the operation of these bureaus.

It began to be evident to me while in Washington, and became much more evident to me a few days later at the port of embarkation, at Hoboken, New Jersey, that the General Staff and the bureaus of the War Department were not working well together. Briefly, the General Staff had not yet learned to be or to function as a General Staff. "Slowly and confusedly [Diary, June 15th] the troopships were here being prepared for sea. Slowly and more confusedly supplies and troops were being brought. Evidently the first convoy of

this expedition had been hurriedly ordered. Lack of system, lack of direction, cohesion, and organization were evident upon all hands and in everything. Supplies and troops were loaded in confusion and disorder. Men were sent to ships unprepared to receive them. Supplies were piled in pell-mell. Many had to be unloaded. Some ships received too many troops, some too few, and had to be changed. Men came expecting to go aboard to live and had to stay ashore or on a lighter and live as best they could. Troops intended to be put aboard ships to live had to be held for a couple of days in railroad freight yards, blocked in by freight trains, and most dirty and uncomfortable. . . . One ship, the *San Jacinto*, my own, could not accommodate the number of men sent to it. For twenty-four hours it had not adequate wash places for the troops, because part of the places prepared drained their waters on one of the decks. It also now has no adequate bathing facilities or ladder capacity from deck to deck to enable prompt abandonment of ship in case of sinking or fire. In truth, the *San Jacinto* is ill prepared. One of her troop decks leaks so badly upon the one below that we dare not wash the upper. But the troops all got aboard *somehow*. That is all one can say—*somehow*."

These things are recalled here, and were written at the time, in no critical humour. I think that the entire contingent of troops, and certainly I myself, was in the least critical frame of mind of my entire life. All seemed to feel that this was no time for quibbling. The facts and the diary are quoted here as historical memories and to show what was naturally to be expected in the coming operations of the War Department. Bad as they sound above, affairs at the port of embarkation

seemed better managed and showed more direction and head than at Washington. My stop at Washington frightened me as to our prospects for the war.

There is no indication in my diary, and I have no memory of what I thought at the time as to the real purpose of the formation of this first contingent of troops for service in France. Long afterward we knew that it was sent in response to the urgent appeal of Marshal Joffre, largely for the moral effect upon France and the French Army, which had suffered severe losses and check in the spring of 1917. But the division itself really expected soon to be in the fighting. The point of embarkation was Hoboken, New Jersey, on the piers of the German Hamburg-American line, which had been seized by our Government. The troops composing the division were expeditiously gathered, coming very largely from the remote Mexican border. On June 8th, they began to come aboard and, excepting the artillery of the division, were on board by June 12th when apparently all the transports had left the pier and were down New York Bay. "I believe [Diary] that spies would have found it difficult to decide when the first convoy was to put to sea. It actually was hard for us aboard to learn."

After I had been at Hoboken some days waiting for the arrival of the regiments of my future brigade, I heard that General Sibert, the officer selected to command the division now being ordered to France, was in New York. He did not for some time appear at Hoboken to see to the embarkation of his troops. I do not know who had selected him for the command. He was an engineer officer who had so distinguished himself as an assistant to General Goethals in the

construction of the Panama Canal that he had been promoted to a general under a special act of Congress. As compared with his future generals, colonels, and even other field officers, he had had little experience in the command of troops. I doubted the wisdom of his selection. "Waal, now," said an old soldier once to a young lieutenant, "soldiers is queer bein's. Yer have to get so yer can understand 'em." Getting so you can understand 'em may, of course, come to an officer by the gift of God, without the need of having to live with soldiers: but generally it does not. In the main it comes from experience with soldiers, rarely in any other way. General Sibert had not had that experience.

The quietness of our departure I could but compare with the memory of the noise of the movement of our first troops in the Spanish-American War. That was a picnic; this promised to be a tragedy.

A day or two before the troops were all aboard the transports at Hoboken, General Bliss, the Acting Chief of Staff, came into the Superintendent's office, where I happened to be. I noticed along with General Bliss a very small man in civilian dress. In stature and manner he was so overshadowed by General Bliss as to appear quite insignificant. I stood at attention to and saluted General Bliss, but paid no attention to his companion. After some little time General Bliss, in his absent-minded way, seemed to remember this companion and to remember me also, and I was presented to the little man—Secretary of War Baker! I had all the time up to that instant taken him to be, perhaps, General Bliss's secretary or stenographer.

When I really looked into the little man's face I found it a very intelligent one, a thin face, beardless, with a



marked Jewish cast of countenance, a very prominent nose, and an observant but not an especially alert look. Mr. Baker had a very slight stoop and an almost boyish figure, and his size seemed the smaller in contrast with that of General Bliss. His presence was not impressive. He looked as though he was about something which he did not understand, seemed uncomfortable, not self-possessed. His person and manner affected me at the time as those of one who would never, in an executive position, be assertive. They were certainly not commanding.

Many times since this first meeting I have met Mr. Baker and observed him, and in the course of ordinary affairs have had many occasions to form opinions about him. Through it all he has appeared to me the same unostentatious, quiet, unassertive, almost clerical-looking official; but in many things that have come under my observation he has shown a quiet firmness that no importunity and no man, no matter what his rank, could move. I have seen him when men of much consequence were finding fault with his decisions; yet he always appeared quiet, good-natured and patient, but finally firm.

Two or three times, once just as our first troops had taken their place in line against the enemy, and again at the battle of the Meuse-Argonne, he appeared among the troops in France, without notice and without parade. He seemed upon these occasions to be intent upon helpfulness, upon seeing things with his own eyes and judging for himself. On the last occasion he startled me and my provost marshal by catching us hurriedly herding our German prisoners into a wet, muddy, barbed-wire pen for safe keeping. I was a

little startled and expected criticism, but it turned out that these prisoners were so happy to have got out of the war at last with their lives, that they had little or no growl at the wet and mud of our prison pen.

From time to time I read of him as being in France, and understood that he was making arrangements for the better supply and equipment of the United States troops. Always where I saw him, so far as the troops were concerned, he completely laid aside show and attended strictly to business. He disappeared as quietly as he came. Altogether I believe that the soldier and the army may be said to have seen nothing of him; but they felt the results of his coming. Once, a little while before the Armistice in 1918, the troops where I was were greatly in need of motor transport. I heard that Mr. Baker was making especial arrangements for increasing the supply. I do not know whether this was true. I only know that very shortly afterward the motor transportation allowance had been largely increased. I remember this especially because of subsequent talk that the American Army could not have followed the retiring Germans had the Armistice not come. With this motor transport we would have been able very effectually to pursue them. And I do in memory, whatever the facts may be, attribute this condition to the visit of the Secretary of War.

In our post-war politics and our post-war facing of the war's great cost, criticism and abuse have been heaped upon him. As I saw him during and after the war, he appeared always to me as one who gave himself with calm devotion and complete self-effacement to the service of his country.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE VOYAGE TO FRANCE

ABOUT 1 P. M., June 14th [Diary], we put to sea with convoy naval vessels—the cruiser *Charleston* and three torpedo-boat destroyers, with one collier. Our transports numbered three, one being loaded with marines.” This was but one section or division of the convoy, another had apparently preceded and one or more were to follow us. “We put out with care, it seemed to me, from the start. We were soon zig-zagging as though we were among hostile submarines, and we have since kept that up.”

Before entraining the troops for the port of embarkation and again at the time of embarkation all organizations had been searched for disloyal persons. On account of suspicion of pro-Germanism or on account of enemy birth or parentage, considerable numbers of enlisted men had been separated from the troops making up the expedition and had been transferred to organizations remaining in the United States. Another culling over at the port of embarkation gathered a few more men and one officer. The measure was unquestionably wise and considerate. Even if they were loyal to the United States, as many of them undoubtedly were, it was better not to require them to fight people with whom they had been especially friendly or who were dear to them personally. Through the culling I passed a young soldier born in Germany who

had been but some five or six years in the United States and at that time had two brothers in the German Army. I felt him to be a loyal American soldier, and so he proved to be in almost two years at the front in France. An officer, a captain of my old regiment, the 26th Infantry, was, largely upon my report, held back as of doubtful loyalty: though born in America, he was of German parentage. After it had been decided that he should not be allowed to accompany the expedition, he showed me a letter of high commendation from a highly trained American officer who had made a thorough study of German methods of training. The commendation was tinged with defeatism. I had near me also another officer who had made a similar study. Both of these officers had been so moved with admiration of German military methods that they had become practically pro-German, and it took some months of the war to change their view. "The impression [Diary] that the average man derives from hearing them talk and from being with them is the hopelessness, the utter folly of our resisting or fighting the Germans at all." Too much knowledge of the difficulties of an undertaking is not always a good thing.

Another incident to show how little appreciation even the high departments of our government had of a danger which two or three months later the people of the whole country were engaged in repressing: a short while before our declaration of war, feeling sure that war would come, I made an official report of another officer of my regiment for dangerous pro-Germanism. No less an official than the Inspector General of the United States Army recommended that I be investigated for having made such a report!

Our convoy, zig-zagging practically all the time, seemed very slow. On the second or third day out the whole little squadron had target practice at a simulated submarine periscope. Some two hundred shots in all were fired, but the simulated periscope escaped all damage. This was not very reassuring in case submarines should actually come.

Our flotilla apparently avoided company as much as possible. All the great ships that we saw en route had on their gray coats of paint for concealment against the eyes of a German periscope. There came up with us a considerable fleet of ships bearing from the south under convoy of a great British cruiser; and by dark we were quite near them. Their company, however, was apparently not agreeable, for we soon changed course and zig-zagged away from them. Company even of the best would attract attention, and we were proceeding circumspectly, our torpedo-boat destroyers going well out and examining minutely all passing vessels. Most of them we found to be British. Nevertheless, any company was bad and we quit it as fast as we could.

On June 19th, about dusk, one of our ships sounded the alarm of submarines. "The whole fleet, of course [Diary], and all on board prepared. In a little while one of our transports fired a shot or two. Everybody stood by. Later still a destroyer fired three or four shots. Later still our convoying cruiser fired a shot. All ships, I heard, believed they saw periscopes. There was, of course, intense excitement and equally intense silence. All hands were ready for any emergency. We went under full speed, zig-zagging all the while. I watched our course. I think we turned off to the

south for at least two hours. We had been going, in the main, eastward. I slept little until 1 A. M., and then with all my clothes on. I was badly scared; we seemed so helpless. But I noticed that ships and men obeyed the orders provided for the alarm. About midnight darkness and fog enabled us to feel reasonably safe. Nothing further."

The gratifying thing about this alarm was the absolute obedience of the troops aboard my vessel to the plans provided for such a contingency. It was most encouraging. Next day I ordered all officers to say to the men: "We have escaped with all ships and all men, because all ships and all men obeyed their orders when we met the submarines. Obey to-day, to-morrow, and always. That will be our safety." The lesson went home.

"*June 22, 1917* [Diary]. Yesterday we met two or three British merchant ships going toward America. All were armed. They seemed quite unafraid (as they were approaching us), from which I conclude that they had already run into some other division of our convoy ahead of us and had been prepared for meeting us. . . . We are somehow making very slow time to-day. I have a sort of an idea that the preceding divisions of our convoy are being conducted into some European port, one after another, and that our division is killing time awaiting its turn." Nobody aboard, except the officers of the ship, knew what course we had taken from the United States toward Europe. The constant zig-zagging and the irregularity of it had confused us. We didn't know whether we were to the north or to the south of the usual route of travel, or whether we were going to Great Britain or direct to



France. In fact we did not know that we were going to France: we only suspected it from the success of Marshal Joffre's visit to the United States. How completely the troops were at a loss to know where we were, how far we had gone, or how far we were still from land may be seen by the fact that after the notation above was written we steamed for four days more before reaching the coast of France. At no time, however, from the very start until the landing was there any relaxation of the care and the watchfulness against possibility of submarine attack.

"On the night [Diary] of the 23rd or the 24th (I do not now recall which), at 12 P. M., a submarine alarm was sounded by my transport. I was out of bed before the sound ceased, finding that the ship's watch had seen coming toward us, at an angle, what was either a torpedo or a great fish, stirring up the phosphorescence. Our ship stopped, the object passed across our bow and was seen no more. Few aboard turned out; we have become less susceptible to alarm." We were fast acquiring on the sea that callousness to danger that on land brings men to the end of even a long life still not expecting death. It is human nature and saves us many times the agony of death before we die. Although this alarm passed off without incident or accident I shall always remember the noise of the great whistles of the different ships as carrying the sensation of a great shudder passing through the fleet—so much so that for two or three years afterward, even in the quietest time, a ship's whistle would wake me with this same sensation.

The three or four sections of the convoy carrying the 1st Division proceeded separately, and finally ar-

rived in France three or four days apart. Each section reported unsuccessful German torpedo attacks. "There seems no doubt [Diary] that we were pursued and fired at, but of course the rumours were exaggerated as to number and danger." These rumours caused in the United States, I afterward learned, a great deal of excitement and incredulity as to any attack or attempted attack by German submarines upon any section of our convoy. During the two weeks of our crossing there was a great falling off in the losses of Allied ships from German submarines. This would seem to indicate that the enemy submarines were perhaps just then giving their attention to seeking our convoy. But leaving aside all other mere indications, the two alarms I witnessed did not evoke such a state of excitement or fear upon the part of the regular naval convoy or the people aboard as would make one believe that they "saw things."

The first sign of approach to Europe was the appearance about June 25th of two or three small, swift, French torpedo boats. These took up the scouting as flankers and advance guard of the section of the convoy to which my boat belonged. They could do little else than scout, being very very small.

Early on the morning of June 28th our section of the convoy seemed to be loafing somewhere in a fog. Then the fog lifted, and slowly we moved into the mouth of a river and to the port of St. Nazaire, France. We knew where we were at last.

As the vessels moved slowly toward the port and quays, many eyes were turned upon this Old World for the first time, mine among the number. And the thing that impressed these unaccustomed eyes was the clean-



ness, neatness, and especially the finish of the villages and houses along the banks. We had seen but little, we needed to see but little of it before we were exclaiming: "What a beautiful country, a land indeed worth fighting for!" About our landing there was nothing unusual. "We disembarked [Diary] and have been in camp (cantonment prepared by the French) a couple of miles out from St. Nazaire ever since. The cantonment is very well fixed considering all things, but it is not and never will be as good as we've been accustomed to in the U. S. Water and wood are very scarce. Water is hauled fifty miles in boats and then pumped into tanks for our use." The French were doing this for us. How little, with these simple and inadequate means, they foresaw the mighty American effort that transformed not only St. Nazaire, but half a dozen other ports into mighty camps with everything essential to life in war!

The troops, both officers and men, still knew little of the real purpose for their appearing in France. Most of them expected to join in the fighting at the front without delay. So little real comprehension had any of us of the conditions which we were facing! It was to be months before any of us would see the front. We had not upon landing, we later found to our chagrin, anything but a willingness to fight. We lacked not only the training, but the organization; and even for the infantry, the body of the army, we lacked the kind of arms with which we were later to face the enemy. This knowledge very quickly came to me. "I fear the French [Diary two weeks after landing] will grow tired of waiting on and helping us before they at last see us go forward. There are signs in their newspaper articles

that they expect much of the United States. We are trying, however, to keep down their expectations of any early effective military help."

I had noted on the voyage that nearing the scene of war was somehow changing the thoughts of officers and men. They began while upon the way to grasp more really the fact of war. Now, in France, men seemed to come all at once, as if in consequence of the mere presence of reality, to a just understanding of what the war and training for war meant. Arrival brought the unquestioned conviction that the final and highest finish of training and preparation must be made here in France, in the presence and in the atmosphere of war. Once here, no one seemed to have any other idea. It took possession of all minds.

The restrictions upon what our men could write in letters home or elsewhere at first bore very hard upon us all. In our new situations we felt an almost irresistible desire to tell our friends at home all about where we were, what we were doing, and what the American and Allied forces were doing or hoped to do. Of course, the experience of the Allies before we came showed that this would simply be giving direct information of our purposes to the enemy. Our own American censorship regulations therefore were strong against it. At first it chafed. After a month or so it was astonishing how little men really desired to write of what was passing about them. Instead of having to restrain them in writing, it soon became necessary for the authorities to urge them to write home in order to let their own people know that they were well and hearty, or ill. And these measures of exhortation had to be supplemented by providing everybody with

facilities, pen and ink and paper and stamps, in order to induce them to do it. This passing so quickly from one extreme to another—early irritation and final absolute callousness—was an amusing and striking thing.

## CHAPTER V

### PERSHING

**H**ARDLY were we settled in camp before General Pershing appeared from his headquarters in Paris, whither he had gone some two weeks before, to conclude arrangements with French authorities for our entry into the war.

Here, then, was the man destined to command the American forces in the war. I had known him since the time when both of us were in West Point. He had come as a plebe in the summer of 1882, one class behind me: but except that he had been elected president of his class, I heard nothing of him for a year, when he was made a corporal. In those days, these two things, class president and a yearling corporality, were not signs of high standing in studies, but rather of military, manly serious bearing and of at least a good scholastic standing. A year later he came as first sergeant to "A" Company of the Cadet Corps, of which company I was the "*n*th (last ranking) cadet lieutenant; but as he was of another class from mine and of different grade, I was never intimate with him. He was, however, for a year constantly before my eyes, and I saw soon after he came, that he justified the judgment of his classmates in making him class president and of the tactical officer in making him corporal and first sergeant. I have heard that before coming to West Point he had taught school. I do not know whether this is

true. If so, it probably accounts for the judgment and poise which made him more mature than most cadets, as well as for the prompt development of the right idea of authority and command; for this he certainly developed.

Of regular but not handsome features and of robust, strong body, broad shouldered and well developed; almost or quite six feet tall; plainly of the estate of man while most of those about him were still boys; with keen searching gray eyes and intent look, Pershing inspired confidence but not affection. Personal magnetism seemed lacking. He won followers and admirers, but not personal worshippers. Plain in word, sane and direct in action, he applied himself to all duty and all work with a manifest purpose, not only of succeeding in what he attempted, but of surpassing, guiding, and directing his fellows in what was before them. His exercise of authority, was then and always has been since, of a nature peculiarly impersonal, dispassionate, hard and firm. This quality did not in him, as in many, give offence; the man was too impersonal, too given over to pure business and duty. His manner carried to the minds of those under him the suggestion, nay, the conviction, of unquestioned right to obedience. There was no shadow of doubt about it. This faculty he has carried through life. It was twice questioned by subordinates: once by one who, as I heard, was convinced by Second Lieutenant Pershing in shirt-sleeves, and once, I know, by one who within forty eight hours had paid with his life for his disobedience to Captain Pershing—dying of cholera. I buried him.

On becoming a first-classman, Pershing was made first captain in the Corps of Cadets, the highest and



most coveted place that a cadet can hold. To stand first in studies, to graduate at the head of the class, is as nothing to it, indicates nothing as to a cadet's military capacity. While at West Point, then, he had received the highest mark of confidence that the authorities could give as to his future career as an officer. Books and the learning of books have never been the sole standards of the Military Academy.

Of Cadet Pershing one memory more. He was a hop-goer, what cadets called a "spoony" man. He loved the society of women. That, too, like other early characteristics, seems to have held on with him.

On leaving the Military Academy, Wiley Bean, an erratic queer fellow of a classmate, seems better than any other of Pershing's associates to have divined what was in Pershing for development. By nature a politician, Wiley's queer mind, seeing something unusually superior and promising in his classmate, jumped at political honours for him. "He will be President," said Wiley. He has not become President, but before the world he has risen almost as high as the Presidency, and his place in history is as secure as most presidents'.

Serving after graduation in the Apache country near him, I heard favourable comments of him as a chaser, with others, of the "Apache Kid," and I met him at rifle competitions. Then my army associates talked of his having attracted the attention and friendship of the great American, Theodore Roosevelt, at the Battle of Santiago, or at least during the Spanish-American War. But, personally, I came no more in contact with him until 1902, in the Moro country in Mindanao. Here he clearly showed the qualities that made his career; and I had exceptional means of judging

his character as viewed by the authorities over him, by his brother officers, by Moros who came under his authority, and by members of his command. The Moros were Mohammedans of peculiarly warlike and fanatical disposition, very difficult to manage, and almost non-understandable by our army or civil officials.

Captain Pershing was commanding a troop of cavalry on the north shore of Mindanao, on the edge of the region occupied by the Moros. He, almost the only one of the officers of a considerable garrison, became very much interested in these people; and by associating with them and studying them won their confidence and admiration. He became, in fact, very influential with them locally. These things I saw or learned for myself on the spot, often by the adverse criticism of men who were jealous or who disapproved of his thus occupying himself. The Moros, it is to be remembered, had always been a bugaboo to the Spaniards in their occupation of the Philippines, and a terror to the other Filipinos. The Americans had inherited the idea that they were irreconcilable, and impossible of civilization. Pershing's influence began to lead them toward the American authorities. This attracted the attention of General George W. Davis, who was at the time charged with the provision of some sort of civil-military government for them, and who soon put Pershing's knowledge and influence to use.

On account of the violently warlike, savage, marauding and aggressive disposition of the Moros, their control had been left to the Army when the rest of the Philippine Islands passed under the civil government. An American expedition into central Mindanao in 1901 or 1902 resulted in our military occupation of the south

shore of Lake Lanao. Thither Captain Pershing, on account of his special knowledge of Moro character, habits, customs and religion, was at once called by General George W. Davis, commanding the department, to be military commander and take charge of relations with the Moros there. He was given this duty when there were on the spot other officers many years his senior in age and service. This was accomplished, of course, by a species of military jugglery, but it was amply justified by the conditions. Ill-judged treatment of friendly Moros by an officer of mine had nearly precipitated a general war with the Moros, and I noted in my Diary at that time:

*"Camp Marahui, Mindanao, P. I., August 24, 1903.*

The more I see of this unusual work the more I know that few men are fit to manage it, and the more I am of the opinion that General Davis did right to keep Pershing in charge of these Moros instead of placing in charge some fool officer who ignorantly supposed that he could come and in an off-hand manner manage these savages."

In Pershing's services in the Moro country I also noticed his loyal adherence to the orders, plans, and wishes of his superiors. These were almost always contrary to the views and desires of brother officers and soldiers about him, and he was steadily and severely criticized for his strict adherence to those orders when he might have deviated from them; all of no avail—he still adhered. This then became or had already become—and has remained to this day—the marked characteristic of the man: loyal acceptance of and obedience to authority, no criticism or fault-finding with the plans and conduct of affairs by his superiors.

I saw him immediately after the fearful German drive in March, 1918. The whole Allied world looked black, and everybody was laying blame. "It looks bad," he said, "but I suppose it couldn't be helped; our authorities have seemed to do all they knew how."

His Moro services fully launched him upon his successful career: his name was made. In 1906 he was promoted from a captaincy to a brigadier-generalcy, jumping scores and scores of his seniors, myself among the number. Convinced of Pershing's efficiency and merit, notwithstanding the wide criticism of his promotion, notwithstanding the common assertion that it was due to the senatorial influence of his father-in-law, Mr. Warren, Chairman of the Senate Military Committee, I wrote to him a sincere letter of congratulation—to which I received no answer.

Pershing's earlier conduct of the Insular Bureau of the War Department and his subsequent conduct of the Villa punitive expedition into Mexico in 1916 seem to group themselves about his Moro experiences. Of the Villa expedition all military men know that under the orders he received he had as much chance to get Villa as to find a needle in a haystack. He must have known this before he started, yet nowhere does he seem to have broken over the restraining conditions of these orders. Down at Brownsville, when I heard of his selection and his orders, I said, "He will obey his superiors absolutely. Had the President searched the whole army over to find a commander of this expedition he could probably have found no other who would be ready so absolutely to obey his instructions and comply with his wishes in every respect."

Such was the man, as I saw him, that came to com-



mand the A. E. F. in Europe: ambitious, fit, intent upon his purpose, vigorous, firm, thoughtful, discreet, impersonal and dispassionate in requiring obedience, creating and holding confidence by this very efficiency, but nowhere arousing enthusiasm except upon success; not a personal leader; admirable but not magnetic.

Almost two years later, at the pinnacle of success, I see him as he reviews and speaks to his victorious troops without stirring their enthusiasm. I write: ". . . the lack-scandal and lack-discontent of this war as compared with others will make him one of the two most successful Americans and would probably make him President if he but had a little more 'mixing' ability. He inspires no enthusiasm ever; respect, yes, but respect doesn't generally elect a President."

A visit to the camp, at St. Nazaire, a brief talk stating his expectations as to the conduct and work of the first arrived American contingent, and General Pershing was gone, for one of his most marked characteristics was directness and simplicity of action. He has done his greatest deeds as simply and naturally as a man washes his face when he rises in the morning.

Soon afterward, on July 4th, to be exact, at the instance of the French national authorities, General Pershing ordered a large battalion of one of our infantry regiments sent to a great parade in Paris. This was plainly to show the French people that America had appeared in France. It proved a tremendous encouragement to the whole nation, as was easily seen in all the French newspapers.

At once upon our arrival at St. Nazaire, the joy of the French inhabitants was very marked. It shone in all faces, and showed itself in the acts of private citizens



and officials, civil and military. From the first nothing seemed too much trouble for any man, woman or child to do for an American. The principal officers of our division, including myself, were officially entertained by the local civil and military authorities, the prefect and the mayors of cities near by, and the general commanding the region. Joy and cordiality were most marked and effusive. There was no mistaking our welcome. Unity and agreement marked all Franco-American intercourse; whether the two understood each other's language made no difference. My aide, who speaks not a word of French, spends an evening with a Frenchman and his wife who speak not a word of English. Neither side understands what the other says; but the conversation hardly lags on this account. When it finally does, the aide, who is something of a wag, looks earnestly in the faces of his agreeable companions and emphatically asserts, "All-honky-dory; indeed, all-honky-dory, I say." "*Oui, oui, oui*," comes the agreeable reply, "*oui, oui, oui*." The Franco-American agreement on all subjects caused Colonel McAndrew, the future Chief of Staff of the A. E. F., to remark, "Even the French birds agree to what we Americans say; they twitter, '*Oui, oui, oui*'."

A great patriotic Franco-American meeting was held at Nantes, where Frenchmen and Americans with really full hearts poured out their feelings. In the various meetings, public and private, that were held between French and Americans, it developed that the Frenchmen's idea was that the President of the United States had led the people of the United States into the war, and that he was wise in going slowly in this leading; since,

if he had tried earlier to lead the people into war, he knew that he would not have found them ready and the effort would have failed. This was an interesting view to us, because to most of us it was evident that far from leading the people in himself, he had himself been dragged into it by them. He was pacifist, as long as it was possible to be, and held back as long as he could. I recall a speech of Mr. Elihu Root on this subject some months before war was declared. "If," he said, "the President wishes to know the will of the people, let us cry aloud to him our desires in this matter of war. Tell him that we want it."

Early we had the knowledge come home to us that we knew little of our future allies, the French, and they as little of us. One day I met two French soldiers far out in the country.

"Who are you?" I asked.

"We are military gendarmes." Both stopped and showed themselves quite affable and ready to pursue the conversation.

"You are two very fine-looking, strong soldiers," I said. They did have exceptionally vigorous bodies.

"Oh, we are mountaineers from the Pyrenees," one answered. I had been speaking to them in broken French, and now I addressed them in more facile Spanish:

"Then you speak Spanish, probably, do you not?"

"Oh, yes, yes, as well as we speak French. You are an American, are you not?" they asked me.

"Yes," I answered.

"That is why you speak Spanish so well."

I laughed, and both of them then, on learning my

rank, requested to be employed as interpreters between the Spanish-speaking Americans and their French allies.

Many of us, no doubt, appeared as odd and outlandish to Frenchmen as they appeared to us.

To me, who had been accustomed from my childhood to stories and memories of the hardships and poverty that resulted in the Southern States from the four years' War of Secession, the apparent condition of the French seemed very far from bad. I had expected to find rags and hunger. Instead I found good clothes and by no means empty stomachs. Soldiers and civilians alike looked well kept and well fed. Of course, the Government was supervising the use of meat, bread, and sugar, but there was apparently enough, especially for the economical, careful, saving French. When a few days later the 1st Division was moving off by rail to a new section of France, the beautiful meadows, well-kept fields, large areas of wheat, and great herds of white cattle increased the impression that France, though she had suffered greatly in killed and wounded in the war, was still neither starving nor destitute. As time went on these impressions remained unchanged. Everywhere and always there seemed plenty—or at least plenty as compared with what we had expected to find. But everywhere and always we saw the marks of mourning. Men had died in battle and in campaign in vast numbers. That was evident.

The division was soon ordered toward the scene of future action. "We came [Diary] by rail with almost none of the comforts and conveniences of railroad travel to which we had been accustomed in the United States. The men and animals were in small box cars,

the officers in very, very poor passenger day cars, no sleeping cars for any one, and in most cases no seats for the men. But everyone took it all good-naturedly. Everyone ate travel rations, but about twice a day we made halts where hot coffee and water were provided. French authorities conducted the movement entirely." It was well done, notwithstanding the poor-looking rolling stock. Indeed, the execution was out of all proportion good as compared to the looks of things. The movement of troops in war had become their daily and usual life. Fineness, cost, and complexity had been eliminated by long practice. And nowhere did I see any but minor officials.

"These French people [Diary] are very thrifty and hard working. Everyone seems to work, men, women and children." Travel conveniences and other comforts were lacking to all the people, but the real essentials, the necessities, were not lacking. Care, economy, thrift, increased production, had saved them—not mere reliance on "more pay," "a higher wage," which alone seem to be the reliance of Americans, whatever may be the cause of shortage in any thing.

Far from badly off also appeared the French troops.

"*July 18, 1917* [Diary]. A few days ago I saw a review of a crack French division. It was a fine, fine sight. Everything was cocky and snappy. They were in full uniform, though just from the front, and horses and men were beautifully kept."

## CHAPTER VI

### FIRST ACQUAINTANCE WITH THE FRENCH

FULL-DRESS uniform in the midst of war and just from contact with the enemy! It was something new to our eyes. War or the field had heretofore meant to us the rudest and simplest kind of dress and equipment. Here, evidently, war was being made with pomp and show. In the review the conduct of men, and even horses, was such as would indicate the highest spirit of self-confidence and exultation in being fighters. It all seemed especially strange, because we knew that just at this time there was great depression in the French ranks. As time went on and we discovered more and more the depression that was everywhere spread among the French, the proud, cocky appearance of these French troops more and more surprised us. The division was a crack one. I have never known whether it felt really as it looked—high-spirited—or whether from mere habit of ceremony and show the high spirits were only on the surface. If the former, the occasion was certainly a proof of what drill and habit may do with men—change their heart and nature.

Just about this time I write:

“*July 30, 1917.* I have seen a large French headquarters, the schools and the lines; many officers, too, of the line and staff. Nowhere do I find the spirit of the offensive. It doesn't show here: the French



here have it not." (This quotation refers to the French line in Alsace-Lorraine, the quietest always except at the start of the war). "We have heard much in France of winning the war. It will never be done with the unaggressive spirit prevailing here. I am concerned about it."

And again:

"The French count on nothing else than purely trench warfare. Plainly they show that they consider their part of the offensive of this war as done. Without saying, they seem to feel that they have done their part, and expect others to carry on the war when any carrying on is to be done."

The 1st Division (except its artillery) had now, by the middle of July, come into billets in a training area with the headquarters at Gondrecourt, not far from the St. Mihiel salient. "And now we are [Diary], for the first experience of American troops, billeted upon the inhabitants. . . . But the people receive us exceedingly hospitably. We seem welcome." Hardly less unusual and surprising to us than the review in full uniform was this billeting experience and our welcome among the people.

Billeting was one of the things for which our colonies revolted against the rule of England. It has always been obnoxious with us. And here we were actually being welcomed into the houses of Frenchmen. The simplest of our soldiers were very backward and apologetic in taking advantage of it. The condition was quite different with the French troops who were billeted also among the inhabitants very close to us. Amongst them the French soldiers lived *en famille*, completely at home. To this condition, however, in the course of

time, our soldiers became used, and when at last we were leaving France, revisiting some of the old regions that had been occupied by troops under my command, I found individual American soldiers back there on furlough, visiting French friends with whom they had established close relations when in their former billets. The billeting accounted for many French brides upon our return to the United States, though, contrary to the expectation of most Americans, the Frenchwomen of the villages were not found especially attractive. The hard labour that three years had brought upon all had perhaps taken away the daintiness, brightness, spirit and show of taste for which the world has known French women.

But to one of the conditions of this life of billeting the American soldiers never did fully adapt themselves. It was to the *fumier*—the heap of manure piled at the front door of every villager—the sign of his thrift and even of his wealth, but a disagreeable thing, irritating and dangerous in the dark, and a kind of front yard ornamentation to which our soldiers could never grow accustomed. It was not only a stench in his nostrils by itself, but it also did not fit with the American's grand ideas. It was a mark of economy. Economy had ceased to be a virtue with us thirty years before: it had become a nuisance. Now here were the French making it a worse nuisance in the way they exercised it. As a matter of fact, this one little thing was the cause of more impatience and irritation of American soldiers toward the French population than anything that I can now remember. The French villagers' habit of having farm animals and people living close together under the same roof was repulsive to our sensibilities.

The same difference of disposition, our wastefulness and the French economy, came to the surface again in the matter of wood and trees. In France a tree or a piece of lumber is a sacred thing, and wood, even ordinary fire-wood, almost as much so. In America and even in England, when a tree is spared, we write poetry about it. In France, when it is not spared, the law and the people get hold of a man. Now, in our daily lives in billets in French villages, in the raw, damp weather there was a tremendous desire among Americans to build a fire, a big one, and for this purpose, at first, there was a tendency to lay hands upon every piece of wood or lumber, or to fell every tree that was in reach. It literally caused hysteria among the French people. A little later I knew a regimental commander to lose his regiment and a major general his division because of a few dead trees cut upon the premises of a high French official.

Constant efforts were therefore necessary to impress Americans with the French view, the absolute necessity of respecting wood, lumber and trees. We didn't always succeed, and sometimes peculiar means had to be used to smooth ruffled relations. On one occasion, passing a village in the war-ruined region of France, I explained to a French official the difference between the American and the French points of view in this matter, and expressed the hope that he and his people would be patient, assuring him that the American authorities were doing everything possible to prevent destruction, and would in the end pay for all such. He answered in a very irritated tone,

"Yes, I know that you have more trees and burn more wood than we. But I would like to know if you

Americans are in the habit of burning up your house furniture; because here is one of my people now who complains to me that an American captain has broken and burned up a sideboard in his house."

I saw that there was no use trying to smooth him by the usual expression of regrets, and so forth; so I answered him humorously:

"Yes, we have that habit. If an American gets up in the morning and is not feeling well, he is just as likely as not to chuck his bed right into the fire."

The prefect saw the humour of the thing and accepted the situation with a voucher for payment for the sideboard.

As between the French population and the American soldier, the saving of much friction was due to the children. There were too few children even in regions distant from scenes of war, but wherever children were the French seemed greatly impressed with the American's love for them. This unquestionably smoothed feelings very much.

An incident shows the interest of the French in the Americans: One day in Lyons I received a letter that had been wandering over France for a couple of weeks. It said: "I see that an American general named Bullard is somewhere in France. Some ten years ago an American army officer helped me, a French missionary, in Cuba. I wonder if you are the same." And the writer gave an address a few blocks from my office. In a few minutes after receipt of the letter I had called upon Father Regis Gerest, now become a noted preacher in southern France. He was the same I had known, as he said, ten years before in Cuba, a simple French missionary teaching small children.



Americans carried with them to France a great affection for the French. There can be no doubt of it. Its causes are found in the beginnings of our history and in the sympathy of our people for the weaker people whom Germany was "bleeding white," deliberately assassinating, when we decided to enter the war. This helped to keep Franco-American relations smooth.

Good relations were also helped by the lively gratitude on the part of the French for our having come to their assistance in the war. They often expressed it: indeed, it was perhaps too much expressed. Our soldiers came after a while to count upon it, expecting too much, as, for example, low prices from the French shopkeepers for the few things of food and comfort for which the demand always far exceeded the market supply where our troops were serving. In this expectation the Americans were disappointed.

Prices by themselves were growing, not lessening, and to this the Americans always and everywhere contributed in two ways: first, being used to plenty, unquestioningly they paid any price, however great, and often in a grand way demanded no change: second, supply being often small, they paid any price rather than, by refusing, let the thing go to another willing to pay. In spite of the French law and the request of French authorities to the shopkeepers not to raise prices, the competition of American purchasers had that effect wherever our troops were serving. The resulting high prices became at last a source of bitter complaint and criticism against the French among American soldiers—upon whom, however, the conditions bore less hardly than upon the French soldier and civilian, who had far less money than the American soldier.



Nor was this phenomenon of high prices in France, greater or other than what has been seen a score of times under like operating causes in our own country. In the end our soldiers seemed to understand and criticism ceased.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE SCHOOLS IN FRANCE

AS SOON as we came into the atmosphere of war and our training really began, the first thing that struck my attention was the fact that every soldier in this war was a specialist. Now that we were in closer contact with things, it seemed that little of our previous training, except discipline, fitted the special conditions that were before us. We had trained infantrymen with the rifle, and now we found that the infantryman was not only a rifleman but a rifle-grenade man, a hand-grenade man, a light-machine gunner, a heavy-machine gunner, a Stokes-mortar man, a gas specialist, sometimes a signal man and sometimes half artilleryman for the accompanying gun. Soldiers of other arms of the service, artillery, engineers, signal men, and even labour troops, were similarly required to be all sorts of specialists. At the same time a great number of special service troops, such as pigeon keepers, dog trainers, wireless telegraphers, railroad engineers, miners and wire stretchers, that had never before had a place in our service, had to be called into existence. No war had ever so brought into play every possible profession and occupation.

To meet these requirements, schools had to be started at once. These were destined to take the place very largely of what we had heretofore known as drill. There were in existence among the French and British, our allies

and neighbours, places of instruction for all these kinds of troops—but they were not ours. Further, the simple forms of orders which we had previously followed, in imitation of the German, were now to be replaced by the longest and most complicated orders ever known in military history. The simple little orders of five headings which we had been following for fifteen years were replaced by countless headings and annexes that only a trained staff officer could prepare. Indeed no single staff officer could prepare an order for a division fight.

It was necessary now, in the midst of war, to begin teaching all these things. The teachings of previous wars could not cover all the subjects of this great conflict, whose lessons our government had not allowed our army to study. In the midst of war we had to prepare for war. We had now reason to thank God for our allies who stood between us and the enemy while we could with deliberation and under protection prepare to meet him.

“I was busy [Diary] trying to get my brigade settled in billets and started at drill. Both were accomplished, and I was settling down to a sort of steady life. I had also succeeded in inducing our division commander to establish the special schools for our troops. Then, on the 23rd of July, I was selected by General Pershing’s Headquarters as the head of all our schools to be established, and was sent out with their various heads to visit French and English schools for the training of officers and non-commissioned officers in the kind of warfare that we were to expect here. Here [in Lorraine] I have been now for six days, seeing French special schools and the French front line near us. As usual,

we have been exceedingly well received by the French officers . . . and shown their military methods. My little French has served me well again. The rest of my party, a colonel, a lieutenant-colonel and a major are nearly helpless in communicating with the French about us. . . . I see little drill among the French troops, except drill in purely trench warfare. They count on nothing else."

In the party which accompanied me were two men who afterward took leading parts in the American operations in France. They were Colonel James McAndrew, afterward Major General and Chief of Staff of the A. E. F., and Major Harold B. Fiske, afterward Assistant Chief of Staff G-5, charged with the military instruction of the A. E. F. Both were graduates and instructors of the School of the Line at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and types of the best and most advanced military students of the United States Army. It would be hard, however, to find two men of more opposite character and who, nevertheless, so completely understood each other and worked so well in unison. McAndrew had come to France in command of a regiment of infantry, and Fiske as adjutant of my infantry brigade. When the urgency of instruction loomed before the eyes of the Commander-in-Chief, both of these men were unhesitatingly separated from their commands and put to the work for which they were eminently fit—as was afterward shown in the establishment and the results of the entire school and instruction system of the American Expeditionary Force.

McAndrew was of peculiarly agreeable disposition, a man of great tact, always careful and considerate of the

military opinions of others, yet decided and firm in his own convictions, with the happy ability to avoid arousing opposition to them. Quite different was Fiske. A silent man, of disposition almost morose, keeping his own counsel, very tenacious and uncompromising in his military opinions, and so strong in his own convictions that there was in him always a tendency to override the opinions of others. McAndrew was preëminently a staff officer, Fiske a high type of instructed professional line officer. To McAndrew fell the establishment of the Staff College for the whole American Expeditionary Force at Langres. This became the head school, a place where staff officers and instructors for all other schools, arms, divisions and corps were hurriedly pressed through after their arrival in France. And Fiske became, at General Headquarters, the officer charged with the field instruction and drill of the entire Expeditionary Force. The skill of McAndrew and his great military knowledge established and made the Langres Staff College; the firmness in execution and skill in military instruction of Fiske held up the whole Expeditionary Force to the hardest, most uncompromising and intensive system of drill that the American Army has ever known or probably ever will know.

McAndrew, Fiske, and all of the officers engaged upon the work of establishing schools, were under the direction of Colonel Paul Malone, G.S., at General Pershing's Headquarters. He, like Fiske and McAndrew, stood out in our service as one of the officers of the highest military education. Under his administration all the schools of every branch of the service were established in France; and when he was appointed to a line command, Fiske took his place and continued the work. In the



training of troops it was Fiske's hand and personality that were above all manifest.

Six weeks after their arrival in France, officers and men had not yet got their bearings upon how to prepare themselves for entering the war. "Things are not [Diary] going very much to suit me these days. My school work proceeds very slowly. I do not somehow seem to get my people down to the real thing of work and execution. They scatter. As for the United States getting into this war, we do not seem to be doing it. It is, as far as I see it, a very remote preparing." This quotation shows how poor an idea I had at the time of what we were really to do in the war. I believed that it was a question mainly of preparing the small contingent which had accompanied us on the first trip. The schools, I evidently thought, were for these and perhaps five or six divisions more. Instead, they were to be for a force of two million men before the end. But even with this inadequate idea, the slow beginning illustrates how difficult it was to arrive at a just idea and begin work upon it.

At last after a long drawn out consultation at General Pershing's Headquarters in Paris in regard to the establishment of the schools, after listening to the advice and suggestions and differences of opinion of many staff officers on the subject, I turned to the officer who was especially charged with the matter, Colonel Paul Malone, and said, "You are taking too much advice. Tell us what you want done and we will do it." His answer was in substance, "All right: go and establish the schools." The way to begin is to begin. Within a week the first of them was well under way at Gondrecourt. This school was first started as a 1st Division

school with a personnel of less than a hundred men—teachers, attendants, cooks, labourers, and students—with some twenty tents and two little portable barracks.

Among the officers of the 1st Division there largely prevailed our old idea that experience in war was the only proper teacher of war-making, and that war having come, schools should cease: we should take the field and learn war there. This explains the small scale of the first work at Gondrecourt. The division commander and many of his officers seemed to regard the school idea as puerility, a fad of schoolmen; very troublesome and irritating at a time when everybody was getting ready to fight. These ideas remained among Americans until they had seen real war at the front. Then every commander wanted officers and men who had been through the schools. The demand for school instruction soon became so great that it could not be met.

A year later the 1st Division school had become the 1st Corps school, with a personnel of between two thousand five hundred and three thousand men. It educated and prepared for active operations against the enemy thousands of officers, non-commissioned officers, and specialists—machine-gunners, automatic riflemen and bayonet specialists, grenadiers, Stokes-mortar men, engineers, signallers, every kind of specialist in field artillery, platoon leaders, company commanders, battalion and regimental commanders, all trained for the special work which they were to do. This school and its sister schools that later were started may justly be regarded as the explanation of the success of the Americans in the field. In all our previous wars and threats of wars our schools seemed to be the first

things to be abandoned. In this they were the first and essential things, the very beginning of war-making. In the Gondrecourt school most of the officer and non-commissioned officer instructors were Americans, assisted in special matters by French and English officers and non-commissioned officers. Most of the American instructors had been sent out for some time to visit the French and British schools, either as inspectors or as students, for as long a time as circumstances would permit.

The material for the first schools was begged, bought, stolen, obtained in any way from the British and the French. Our material had not yet begun to arrive. On account of the inadequacy of our American resources at the time, I accepted an office from the American Y.M.C.A. in Lyons, and a little later could not obtain a coil of wire to hang up certain dummies for bayonet exercises. By way of contrast, a year later I might have had a railroad for the asking.

*"September 8, 1917 [Diary].* Thus far the French have had to do almost everything toward starting the schools. They are also furnishing gasoline, repairs, shelter, etc. for my automobile, and shelter, food, instruction, etc., for the students of the school." However (October 3rd) "the rather disorderly arrival of our students via English transports makes me see that we are not the only people who do things poorly." The French help extended even to the villages and cities. The mayor of Lyons placed at my disposal very convenient quarters for myself and staff in a fine hotel. And throughout France, wherever our troops and detachments were found, the village authorities seemed always to be coöperating.

Our demands on the British and French seemed to both at the time exorbitant. Neither had any just idea as to how great the need of instruction was going to be in the American forces. We knew. These schools, whose establishment was begun at Gondrecourt, were to be the proof of the clear vision of the Commander-in-Chief and the officers working under his direction of the greatness of our subsequent development. Nothing in the whole American Expeditionary Force in France came nearer filling the bill of our American needs, and they were typically American—built in a hurry to meet just the needs of the hour and no more. Our own ideas and the best obtainable experience of the British, the French, and even the Germans were combined in them. Our headquarters and entire organization in France, it may be said, were being built in the same way.

Our first school had not been under way twenty-four hours before I was designated to go to southern France and open two more schools for incoming young officers of infantry sent ahead of their commands for just this war preparation in France. At the same time, Colonel McAndrew was branched off for the establishment of the great Staff College at Langres. The work was now well under way. I remained nominally at head of much of the school work for some three months, August, September, and October of 1917, although I was for the last two months directly engaged upon the infantry officers' schools in southern France.

Elsewhere in France, at the same time, similar schools for young officers just brought into the Army from civil life in the United States were being established by other officers for all arms of the service. These



schools, like the first, depended for their instructors and for their material very largely upon the British and the French, whose readiness and helpfulness could hardly be overstated. Indeed, in the two schools for infantry officers established by me it may be said that I did the talking and the French did all the rest. They laid out the plan of the school, furnished by far the larger percentage of instructors, gave the material, the buildings, the ground, and even the organization for feeding and caring for these young officers. Their consideration and helpfulness appeared all the greater because at this time the signs that America would be very effective in the war were certainly not great. What had thus far come across to France had been mostly talk and promises. Indeed, those of us Americans who happened at that time to be in France had heard so much of this from home, so much "blow" and "brag" and so little else, that we had begun to be ashamed before Europe. Nor was this shame abated for fully six months, not until the terrible drive of the Germans in March, 1918, had brought home to the hearts of the American people that mere talk and promises and "brag" were not winning the war, that unless something were done, and done quickly, the war was already lost. Then, I say, we began to recover "face." Promises began to be realized. Men, arms, material, and everything made good our words, and in the end more than made good.

While the American Commander-in-Chief was constructing the framework of his future command, from July to November, 1917, I travelled a good deal over France, passing back and forth among the schools and to the front lines of the French. New American



troops in small numbers, mainly special troops, as engineers, railroad, aviation, and signal troops, etc., were beginning to arrive. Their wide distribution over France seemed to indicate that the Commander-in-Chief was preparing for a great command. Their movement and distribution were often made, as I have said, under very inexperienced officers, and often were ridiculous. I recall one rich young man who commanded an aviation company. Unable to prepare the payrolls and not knowing how to get his men paid, he drew his own check and paid them himself. He was rich enough to do it. I knew of another who became entirely separated from his company during a railway journey across France; the company going one way and he another. The French authorities to whom he was to report had no news of their coming and did not know who they were or what they were coming for. I rescued him. The discouraging part was to think that we had no better organization than one which allowed such a thing to happen.

"But tell me," asked the French Chief of Staff, "have you no staff in the American Army?" I made this bluff at an answer: "These are good American citizens picked up and uniformed yesterday. They are not troops nor even soldiers yet. No staff, even the best, could secure coherence or soldier-like action among them."

The French put much store by their staff and staff work. On the visit made to him by my school commander, old General de Castelnau had but one thing to say: "Train a staff." We did train a staff, but it has always seemed to me that in staff work, in the giving of orders as well as in their execution, Americans were

by nature more direct, simple, and informed than either the French or the British. American orders, even for our great battles, while modelled considerably upon the French and the English, seemed to me, even to the end, shorter than either the French or the English. Certainly, our methods of execution were more direct than the French. An illustration: On one occasion I asked a French general whether he or I should protect certain viaducts. The protection would consist in the posting of two sentinels. He answered that he was having a study of the question made and showed me a map about three feet square which was being drawn for the purpose of deciding how these two sentinels should be posted. Two weeks later I returned to the same spot and asked the same question. The study was still being made. I find another instance in my diary:

*"September 30, 1917. I have three French officers here with me. . . . The whole bunch is engaged at present in an office that has hardly any reason to exist at all. . . . They are doing their utmost, of course, to create a 'bureau.' I am resisting. I hope in the end to defeat them by breaking up here before very long. I sometimes wonder if their defeat or near defeat by the Germans has not been due to their bureaucracy."*

When the office had been established, the French colonel, who had been at work with me, was so highly pleased that he stood out in the middle of the street of the great city of Lyons, took off his cap, and bowed very profoundly to the office.

The French instructors were tremendously delighted and encouraged by the spirit of the young Americans, and this encouragement and delight were spread by

them to their comrades in the French Army. The Americans were ready to do anything, even the rudest and hardest of manual labour. Not so much so the French students, I thought. They were a bit too careful in their dress. The association of these young American officers and their French instructors made many friends. (As I wrote this, I received a visit in New York from one of these young Frenchmen who came to see me within twenty-four hours of his arrival in the United States.)

While with the schools I was sent by the Commander-in-Chief to attend a French officers' Lycée in the group of armies commanded by General de Castelnau in Alsace-Lorraine. This was confidential. Officers of high rank, generals and colonels of De Castelnau's armies, attended—all that could be spared from facing the enemy at the time. The subjects covered were of high importance and the newest in the war. I was impressed by the difference between the French officers' public show of confidence about winning the war and their private and confidential feeling that there was almost no chance of winning as the conditions then stood. The French newspapers and French official utterances were very optimistic. France was ringing with cries of disorganization among the German people, of failure of German commerce and industry, and the breaking-down of confidence in the German Government. Not so this session of high military officers. They frankly faced and acknowledged that there was almost no chance of victory.

But the session, strange to say, instead of discouraging those who attended, seemed to have just the reverse effect. French officers left there with a better com-

prehension of the conditions that were before them and with a renewed will to face it out. They were perhaps encouraged by the recovering morale of the French Army. This morale, from its low state of a few months before resulting from the French defeats in the spring of 1917 and the treasonable efforts of influential Frenchmen, was now rising daily.

This I did not then understand. In time I better comprehended it. General Pétain had succeeded General Nivelle. He found this low morale; he set to work to raise it; it had to be done. Better than any other French commander he understood his people. Knowing that the French were in no condition to make fresh offensives, he made little effort to have them do so, and when he did fight he was careful to take for each effort a very limited objective which he was sure could be attained. For the same reason he also begged Marshal Haig, says a credible post-war rumour from London, to put forth all effort to draw the Germans to the British front. Then French soldiers were bitterly complaining of not being allowed to visit their homes; that their wives and children were suffering, being neglected; that their affairs were going to ruin; that their food was bad; that their officers paid little attention to the soldiers' condition.

Leaves for the men and greater attention to their needs were ordered by Pétain. But funds were needed at once. Just then, through the personal efforts of General Pershing, the American Red Cross turned over to Marshal Pétain some millions in cash. With this, I heard, the work of helping French soldiers went forward without delay. Once begun, the French Government came to aid and in from three to four

months the whole French Army was a changed thing. Any one could see it.

This work of Pétain endeared him for ever to the French. Marshal Foch they admire for his great courage, military genius, and world prestige; they are proud of him. But Pétain they love. He knew their hearts. He knew what they could do and when they could do it. Like Foch, he knew how to fight, but, unlike Foch, he knew when not to fight. His work in the summer and fall of 1917 saved the French from giving up under the despair of defeat and under the defeatist corruption of the times.

---

NOTE: The discouragement of the French in the winter of 1917-1918 was not continued. The combat record for the last year of the war as given by General Mangin in his book "*Comment finit la guerre*," is:

At the beginning of 1918 the French had 2,900,000 men on the front.

In the defensive battle (23 March—30 June) they lost

145,000 killed, missing, and prisoners

266,000 wounded, etc.

---

411,000

In the offensive battle (1 July—11 November) they lost

110,000 killed, missing, and prisoners

368,000 wounded, etc.

---

478,000

A total of 889,000 from March to November, 1918.



## CHAPTER VIII

### THE ORGANIZATION OF THE A. E. F.

**A** LONG wait from the first until the last of September in daily expectation of arrival of some seven hundred American student officers showed to me a remarkable lack of coördination between our authorities in the United States and those in the A. E. F. Either the means of communication were lacking or men at one or both ends of the line were failing to coöperate. The ordinary member of the American Expeditionary Forces heard from time to time that the cablegrams and other demands of the Commander-in-Chief in France were piling up in Washington unacted upon for long periods. The indications were that this was true and that the trouble was there.

Of course, as the nation had entered upon the war unprepared, it is probable that had the very best of good-will obtained on both sides of the water, there would still have been delays. It is also true that the American people, and probably the Government, were not yet alive to the urgency of the matter and to the fact that we were in a very serious war. But it is also true that it was at about this time that the chairman of the Senate Military Committee declared that the "War Department has ceased to function." I could not help recalling the hesitancy and blockade of detail which I had noted at the War Department as I passed on my way to France—lack of organization and driving

force, a lack of comprehension of "what we were up against." Some months later, with a new Chief of Staff, this condition ceased.

In August and September I had seen much of our American attempts to establish a military organization in France. I heard in those two months much of plans and hopes but saw little of their realization. Practically no progress was visible. It was discouraging. We seemed dependent upon France and England for everything, unable to do anything alone. It gave me and many others the feeling of being looked after, nursed, cared for. Of course, arrangements had been made by the proper American authorities with the French and the English to do all these things for us, and all was at last paid for; but we did not seem an independent, separate nation. In October, still moving about much, I began to see Americans at work far and wide in France. Things began to grow: organization was coming. By the end of October it had arrived. A network of American telegraph lines covered central and southern France; American detachments, small, it is true, but a framework, a beginning, were found at most unexpected places. Officers, offices, and storehouses appeared rapidly and in great numbers. General Pershing's Headquarters at Chaumont began to be called "G.H.Q.," the Great Headquarters. There and elsewhere, I had time to study this organization. The officers most concerned in the making of it explained it to me. I learned my place in it. No other two weeks of study, I think, ever so greatly profited me. After it I felt great confidence in the completeness and perfection of the machine as built up under General Pershing, and this confidence was afterward completely justified.

In the following twelve months of war and movement the machine failed nowhere. Under it no man, no organization, no thing was ever really lost or forgotten: it was a machine that worked in all its parts. Very wisely, all American division commanders in their visits to France beginning about this time, were required to study it. They were to use it later. The only trouble was that they could not give enough time to its study—at most some two or three days. This organization was not French, Italian, English, or German, but, like most things American, a compound of any or all or none of them, as the Commander-in-Chief saw fit. Nor was it hard and fast, but easily changeable and adaptable—and adaptations were constant.

In its building the Commander-in-Chief and his staff were fortunately without much tradition. "Fortunately," I say, because tradition is often more a hobble than a help. Quite in the American way, it was devised for the minute, for the work then at hand. Past and future considerations could be neglected, and the present actual needs could become and did seem to become, the prime considerations. The staffs everywhere were naturally made greater than for the older accustomed armies of Great Britain, France, Italy, and Germany. Greater staffs are always necessary for new forces that have not yet learned to function smoothly.

The new basis of organization made our division, the unit of corps and army, very large, almost twice as large as English, French, or German divisions. It was so made because, on account of unsuitable recruiting and replacement plans, it could not be hoped that a command once depleted or reduced below a proper fighting

strength could be promptly filled up again. It was necessary to fill it very full in the start, that it might go long without the need of refilling. Both the big staff and the big division under the conditions proved right. I saw it. And our British and French Allies, once they got hold of one of our big divisions, grappled it to their souls with hoops of steel. They could hardly be shaken loose from it, although the French (and probably also the British) in our service with them could never quite adapt their organizations to ours or ours to theirs. For three months of its service in a French corps and a French army, the 1st Division under my command had its organization broken up. The French always treated the division practically as a corps. In effect it was as strong as one of their corps, and French army commanders called me to all the assemblies of their corps commanders.

Command, service, supply, training, manœuvre, campaign, battle, demobilization—all of these tests the organization stood. The mind could be stunned with its figures. It is enough to say that, devised and hurriedly put to work *in about four months* under pressure of actual war and in a foreign land, for a contemplated force of only some 300,000 men, it met every strain of subsequent expansion, bringing in, abundantly supplying with all things necessary for war-making, training, fighting, and taking out again more than two million men with their animals, transport, and equipment. One of its most striking parts was the Service of Supply—the “S.O.S.”—our line of communications in France. It was almost an original creation because neither the French nor the British service furnished any adequate example for our guidance.

At the end, this mighty organization attracted the wonder and admiration of the foremost military minds of the world. It was then working at its best. High Allied commanders were sent to visit and study it. Well they might. Its greatness was lost in figures, appreciable only by the eye. I saw it only in its very beginning and its very end. Will the world ever again see its like? I doubt it. But one conceivable condition could call into being its equal—a conflict of the East and the West, something that would take the armies of the West to the yellow East, or the hordes of the yellow East to the West. It was the product of many brains but of one will. Its like could be produced only where but one will governs, not ever in a democracy. Democracy means mediocrity. This was superiority.



## CHAPTER IX

### AUTUMN 1917—A PERIOD OF DEPRESSION

FROM the discouragement and demoralization in which the French Army and people found themselves after the failure of their spring offensive, there was by the end of September a very marked recovery. This encouragement was largely due to the arrival of American troops in France. The recovery had hardly taken effect, however, before there supervened a still more serious depression of spirits. The defection of Russia had become sure, carrying almost consternation to the Allies. Not only had she failed them, the Allies, but it seemed that she was about to desert to the enemy.

The blow was not, however, sudden and shocking; it came slowly; as Russia disappeared, America was appearing in the war. This was some consolation and served somewhat to keep up spirits. Characteristically, too, at the period of their worst disappointment over Russia the French never forgot how greatly Russia, by drawing great German forces to the east, had aided them to win the Battle of the Marne and save France at the very start of the war. They were less bitter and less disappointed with Russian conduct than one would think—less, I believe, than were the British or the Americans—and more discouraged.

And as the Russians slowly failed, the French Government became more and more demoralized and weaker.

I could feel the growing rottenness wherever I was in France. Germany was plainly acquiring friends, spies, and helpers in France these days. Communication with the enemy was growing through Switzerland. There was no mistaking the conditions. French government officials were involved in the weakening and the preparation to yield—involved more, I believe, than was ever proved or than Frenchmen will ever admit. With regard to fighting, a strong feeling of “Oh, what’s the use!” was spreading more and more through France.

To this depression, the slowness of the progress of the American forces in France toward effective entrance into the war contributed. The first American contingent reached France at the end of June, 1917. Other, smaller, contingents, mainly of special troops, had been arriving since that time, but at the end of September we still had no fighting men upon the front line. The French people, having had little idea of the unpreparedness of the United States when it declared war, war-weary and hoping for early relief, were expecting far greater speed than this.

“Unless [Diary, September 30] the United States really gets a move on and puts in soldiers faster here than the present indications promise, our French Allies will become, indeed have already somewhat become, critical. I hear some question already among the weak-hearted as to why the United States puts its soldiers in the railroad shops and leaves the Frenchmen on the fighting line.” Though unjustified, that, nevertheless, was the feeling. “I fear [Diary] we are destined to many failures here in France. I know that Frenchmen who do not know the true inwardness of our early coming to France are now beginning to criticize our not sending American troops

up to the front. The true explanation which these people do not know is that the French Government, through General Joffre, hysterically besought the United States to send some troops over to France—quick! quick!—for the moral effect upon France, which was almost ready to give up the fight. Thus we came hurriedly, not as a military but as a psychological expedition. We have not yet become a military expedition, but we have always, from the date of our arrival, had an enormous moral, bracing effect upon France, who has completely recovered heart and determination for the fight. Thus we have fulfilled our first real purpose, and the French ought now to wait for our military purpose. We are only beginning that now. Yet in the last few days I hear some more talk of French impatience to see us go up to the front lines. Well, they must wait, I should say, as we have as yet very little to put upon the front lines, and if we do anything of the sort it will be for the purpose of deceiving the French public, making it think that we are doing something. If we go up to the front, I should say also that it is most important to do so in isolated units. Otherwise we should soon have nothing upon the front line, because we would soon have to relieve our troops, and if we should send them to the front in larger bodies, we would have no others with which to relieve them. The Germans, if they hit our troops at all, would say that we had been knocked out in the first round.”

American organization in France was, in the middle of the fall, still incomplete and unprepared to operate fully, and the prospect that we would soon be able to take any effective part in the war was small. I write:

“*September 27th.* We are being nursed and cared for

(meaning helped in supply, transportation, and equipment) by the French. They will, I fear, soon become tired and disgusted with us as they are with the Russians and were some time since with the English."

In the midst of this slow progress in making a new organization for our entrance into the war, a part of even that organization which we had carried there, and a very important part, was failing. "While waiting to-day [November 6th] for my auto and aide from Paris, I've had a conversation with an officer of our Quartermaster Department. He gave me some proof that this department was on the whole being very inefficiently managed. I can see otherwise that it is not meeting the demands being made upon it. Indeed, it is failing. Here is another failure for us. Alas, failures are coming thick and fast in this declared, yet non-existent (on our part) war."

As to this failure in the Quartermaster Department, from my earliest experiences in the Army I had felt sure that this department was overloaded, too cumbersome and tied up with law and regulation, had too many functions, to be capable of success in any crisis of war.

Now in the World War, being far too heavy and complicated to be adaptable, it was necessary to split it up into three or more services, depriving it of one after another of its most important functions. The department was too narrow and arrogant for service. With all its functions of feeding, equipping, clothing, and transporting, it was the master, not the servant, of the Army. For years it had ridden upon the Army's neck. In peace it was ever smug, satisfied always with its wide authority and power. Special preparation for war, it ever declined to make. It now, in its inefficiency in



war, encountered the man, J. J. Pershing, who smashed it, as it were, with an ax, to re-form it into four or five separate and efficient services. "Amen!" I said.

Our slow progress in France, however, came mainly from conditions in the United States:

First: A complete lack of governmental and popular understanding of how great was the undertaking, a hope that we could avoid any great part in the actual fighting of the war, that we needed only to give our moral and financial support to the Allies. This was a condition that had obtained in the United States from our very declaration of war. It was a continuation of that popular feeling which in the beginning seemed to think that the Boy Scouts might do it, which just a little bit later resulted in the granting of great financial aid to the Allies, still in the hope of really keeping out of the war, and which finally resulted in the presentation of only boys and undeveloped young men in the first call for officers to be sent through the training schools in the summer of 1917. In short, the nation still hoped to keep out of any real part in the war.

Second: The lack of military organization in the United States to coöperate with our military organization in France. As I passed through Washington in the first days of June, in 1917, I saw what was to be expected, and I left Washington in a state of profound discouragement. I felt sure and so wrote in my diary that the War Department would "fall down." It was now doing so. Before the end of 1917, a great senator, Mr. Chamberlain, chairman of the Senate Military Committee, said, "The War Department has ceased to function." We in France knew that he spoke the truth.



Many times I attempted to secure something needed in the establishment of the schools or in the training or equipment of the troops, and failed. Always the answer of our authorities in France was, "We cannot get it sent from home; it has been asked for repeatedly and long ago but not yet sent; no answer or promise." At the same time, in the midst of these shortcomings, the press of the United States was flooding the world with talk of how many and what great things America was doing, and how great were our operations and plans. Never, it seemed to Americans in Europe, was American brag so great, and never was our actual accomplishment so small in proportion to the brag.

In fact, considering American history, pacifism, and unpreparedness for war, prodigies were being done. At home among ourselves we might well brag, but in the presence of the great deeds, undertakings, and accomplishments of Britain, France, and Germany, Americans should have been silent. However good our intentions, what we were accomplishing at the scene of war was trifling, ridiculous, pitiful. Noise and boast were contemptible. American army officers at the time in France felt it. We were shamed to silence, only saying to our Allies: "We have good will; some day you will see the results if you can only hold out long enough."

"A perfectly enormous amount [Diary, November 25, 1917] of talking and planning and discussing is going on about the part of the United States in this war. It is always what we are 'going to do.' Alas, I think we came *too late*."

"[November 26th.] Arrived and waiting at Chaumont,

General Headquarters, for return of General Pershing, who is in Paris on a conference, the much-talked-of conference of the Allies, where they are supposed to be getting together for unity of action, unity of direction of their efforts. I fear that they are all *too late* in their propositions."

"*December 3rd.* Still waiting here. It is quite in line with everything American in France. We are waiting for everything: I believe the war shows elements that may lead to its end, yet we are not in it. We are waiting on preparation for war. Surely we got a great 'late' on this war. We are sure to see the writing 'too late.' To-day I see a French newspaper, *Le Matin*, filled with news from England and the United States and Russia showing peace the one great topic. In England, France, and the United States there is much talk of fighting on, but now they are beginning to say 'to the end.' The end may be anything. There has recently come in a resisting government in France. That is the spirit, but even since the new government went in two weeks ago, I see in the people signs of loss of interest. *Whatever may be the spirit or complexion of the Government, France is not going to fight any more in this war. They have finished unless forced by Germany.* . . . I see that, although England and France a little more than a month ago made great announcement of how largely and quickly they would aid Italy (just as we to-day talk of backing up England and France), they have as yet been unable to strike a single blow. And our Mr. Wilson continues to send language across the ocean to Europe, language of what he is *going* to do. He is making us the sneer of the earth for talk."

These quotations represented the feelings of almost

all United States army officers at this time. It was truly a blue season.

*Chaumont, December 4th.* "Colonel House's great talk commission passed us here to-day, only caroming on us, not stopping. I haven't the faintest idea why they even caromed here. I am so disgusted with American blow and brag that I cannot these days speak with respect of any of our public men. None of the men whose words reach us on this side has any just conception of what war, and especially present war, conditions are. Our President protectingly and loudly assures Rumania that the United States will stand by her in the peace negotiations, when after eight months we are not in the war except by declaration. Our Secretary of War two months ago declared that small British successes on the West Front 'would seem to be decisive.' Two United States senators in Paris grandly assure France of the great things we are *going* to do for her. And now this (Colonel House's) commission (say the papers) has through its head told all Europe, long, long before we can even make a start, of the grand, grand thing we will do for the Allies in the goodness and generosity of our hearts. Dear me! It is to laugh, and the world will laugh, and France and Rumania and Italy will be disappointed, and France after about six months more will 'give up,' when she sees how little we have fulfilled of our brag, promises, and talk."

"Much talk about peace terms [Diary, January 12, 1918] back and forth between Entente and Boche governmental officers, but our Allies will in my opinion have to reduce their terms very greatly before any peace will ever come. The Americans talk awfully big but do awfully little." This continual, immoderate

talk, brag, and promise with so little fulfilment greatly discouraged, or rather irritated me. Our staff and supply officers had from necessity to answer calls with promises: "We expect to"; "We are going to"; "We will when——"; but rarely, oh so rarely, could they say: "Yes, here it is"; "Granted, go ahead." And this continued so long and so wearily, with one result, failure, that I for one soon found myself impatiently rejecting every promise, no matter by whom made. The only question that I would ask was: Have you done it? and the only answer I wanted was, Yes or No. Any attempt to add a promise enraged me. These wretched conditions of promise, promise, and disappointment commenced from the day of our arrival in France and continued until General Peyton C. March was seated as Chief of Staff at home, in March, 1918.

At the end of October the Allied morale had another tremendous setback from the defeat of the Italians in northern Italy at that time. It was indeed a black day for the Allies.

"*Lunéville, October 28th* [Diary]. To-night I am going to write a conviction that I have long felt, to wit: that we, the United States, came into the war too late. We may perhaps save France from a shameful peace, but we cannot beat Germany. She has beaten Servia, Russia, Belgium, and Rumania. She is now beating Italy. France and England are now practically alone in the war and will be until next summer, when we may be able, if England does not starve this winter, to come into the war to a scarcely appreciable extent. But that would be only enough to save France from a surrender, not more. So far as we are concerned, the war is practically lost; we will get nothing out of it, not even



barren victory. . . . If these things prove true, there is just one man responsible for it, and that is President Wilson. He three years ago prevented any preparation for war by the United States. Had we last spring been prepared for war (as we easily could have been had we started three years ago) we could have had here to-day in France an army that could occupy fully the German armies that are elsewhere effectively winning the war. I repeat, we came into the war too late, and Mr. Wilson is responsible for it."

"*Lunéville, October 28th.* To-night the Italians are crying out to France and probably also to England for help against the Germans and Austrians overwhelming them. They have been literally doubled up, beaten, driven, and are losing enormously. They are in a bad fix. It may involve our entry into action all unprepared. We have not received our arms, except the ridiculous things that we started over here with. We have no proper equipment, but the conditions may force us to go to battle unarmed and unequipped. However, we would probably not be sent to the Italian but to the French front, giving the French a chance to withdraw some of their divisions from the French front to Italy. That would be better. I will begin to think of that, and try to get partially, at least, prepared.

"To-day I have heard a French officer lecture on Germany's condition. In all respects he has confirmed my opinion expressed in my entry in this diary last night. We, the United States, have come into this war too late. I was, by the way, greatly surprised to hear his free expression of how strong he believed Germany to be. Germany, he said, would not starve, would not go into revolution, would not democratize



and was in no danger of breaking down in means, money, or men. He is quite right. His statements were very strong and left me more than ever convinced that we, the Americans, have come into this war too late."

As a matter of fact, at the time of this entry, at the end of October, 1917, the United States had really not made up its mind to come into the war to any such extent as it was later forced to do in the spring of 1918 by the great German drive which nearly defeated the English and the French. Indeed, until this drive our people were not committed to the war. Until then they continued to think that for them the war would not be because it could not be.

"To-night [November 4, 1917, Diary] the governors of England and France, Premiers Lloyd George and Painlevé, are in Italy, called there by the seriousness of the situation after the complete defeat and pursuit, during the past week, of the Italian Army by a German-Austrian-Bulgarian-Turkish one, with loss of some two hundred thousand prisoners and one thousand eight hundred guns! Probably never in the history of war has there been another such great capture. I don't see how Italy can do much hereafter in this war. She must have lost nearly half of all her guns. And now they are consulting together, the three governments. Of course they cannot decide to end the war, but this German victory will nevertheless bring the end. [My prediction failed.] I do not believe France will have the heart to hold out with our help still not in sight; at least she can hardly be expected to hold out another year. Russia is out and Italy almost out; France is worn and England alone is still vigorous. We are not "in it" and

will not be for another year, *if then*. We have not the sea transportation, nor any antidote for the German submarine which seems to be surely getting at England's vitals. And to-day I hear rumours that French socialists are stirring and moving against the French Army. A bad sign indeed at this time. A little expressed discontent will probably make the volatile Frenchman give up this war. He's awfully tired of it already: now a few reverses will make him quit. But after all we and they had better now fight this war to a defeat or a victory; otherwise there will be no end of war even in peace. I see indeed that one may as well be nothing daunted and go on. If beaten, one may as well be dead."

It was the Austrian Army that had long been facing and fighting the Italians, but it was the German divisions and the German warrior spirit and skill suddenly added to this Austrian Army that won this mighty victory. Austria, lately slowly pulling away from Germany, was now literally German and Prussian. The victory seemed to put the heart and all the resources of Austria once again in Germany's hands when for long the Allies' hope had been disunion and separate peace. Before these conditions, Italy, State and Army, according to all reports reaching us, seemed "flabbergasted"; morale, self-reliance, and even organization almost lost. The weak-hearted, anarchistic and disloyal almost took over control. These had apparently been reached in the Italian Army by German peace propaganda and had brought on this catastrophe of defeat.

"Serious [Diary] and threatening conditions in Italy and reported better understanding between Germans

and Austrians. Things *not* looking up for Allies." And a few days later, "News from Italy that Central Powers' armies are still pressing the Italians. They are on the west side of Tagliamento, where it was hoped they would be stopped; but no; they are across it in places and will no doubt get across it in others. I fear Italy is about to be done for." Germans and Austrians were enjoying greatly the fright and punishment of their late ally for turning against them in the war and plainly going, as they deemed, to the highest bidder. And Italy seemed in agony of terror. The Italians had cause to fear what victorious Germany and Austria would do for Italy's deserting them in war after sticking to them in years of peace.

"To-day [November 7th] I've seen the start, the beginnings at Langres of the greatest army school [ours] in France and probably anywhere in the world outside of Germany. Some day, assuredly, we will know something about how to make war. We are certainly calculating on a large scale. I do not, however, much believe that the Allies will hold out until we Americans can get into it, especially if Italy should now largely be overrun and beaten, as it now seems she may be."

And then, a little later, "The war in Italy! No good news for the Allies. I see some little signs in England of greater readiness to talk peace." Most of the depression was caused by this October defeat of the Italians with the enormous losses and the continuously reported corruption of the Italian Army by German propaganda.

Just now, in November of 1917, when General Foch sent back from Italy his short, firm message of fight, the French armies, under the management and reforms and comforting ways of the careful, wise Pétain, sufficiently

recovered courage and morale to appreciate the spirit of the rude soldier but less skilful manager of men who was afterward to direct the Allies to victory. Foch's message from Italy seemed to bring him back to the minds of his comrades in France as a memory, a reliance, almost blotted out among the woes and depressions of the time. It was a stern call to Italy to stand. Its fight, its courage in this hour of depression, turned the French in desperation again toward him as a tower of strength

Such were the conditions—too high expectation on the part of the Allies, especially the French, for our early and effective entrance into the war; the defection of the Russians; the American hope of avoiding any large part in the war; the slowness of our progress in France; the vociferousness, nevertheless, of our public press and some of our public men in promises to the Allies of what great things we were going to do, and finally the Italian defeat—that had brought the spirits of both the Americans and their Allies very low in the last months of 1917. They brought my spirits low, as may be seen from the foregoing and the following diary quotations:

“*Chaumont, December 3rd.* I am writing a good many prophecies in this book these days. I write them herein in order to feel less desire to talk them out, where in all probability they might do harm. I shall now add one: It is, that our General Pershing is not a fighter; he is in all his history a pacifist and, unless driven thereto by the A. E. F., will do no fighting in France for many a day. Now let's see if it does not turn out so. I have had some (perhaps better than others) means and opportunity, in the Moro country in the Philippine



Islands, of observing and judging him. He is a worldly-wise, extremely ambitious, and confidence-inspiring man, but not a warrior. *Voilà mon opinion!* I shall be very glad to find myself mistaken."

I did find myself mistaken. But the diary shows my depressed state of mind at the time. The general depression, too, reached General Pershing himself, for in notifying me in December of my assignment to the command of a division I find noted in my Diary that he was "very urgent about being an optimist over conditions existing. . . . I told him that the people about his own headquarters were too pessimistic over war conditions. He was quite anxious to talk to me, detaining me twice when I arose to go." His urging was not to make me optimistic—he had had no reason in my conduct or words to think me pessimistic—but to impress upon me the need of raising the spirits of all, of giving optimism to the command to which I was just going. When some three and a half months more had brought him but little greater ability to help the common cause, he showed his depression to me in these few words concerning our condition in France and the German drive of March, 1918, which fell with such terrific effect upon the British front: "We cannot be critical; I suppose our government has done all it has been able to do to put us [in France] in condition to help."



## CHAPTER X

### IN COMMAND OF THE 1ST DIVISION

THE schools being now in operation, I found myself with no great desire to remain with them: in fact, quite the contrary. My zest in them had not been in the teaching, but in putting things in operation. I could make teachers quit talking and go to work, but I could not myself teach.

I nevertheless expected with a down heart to be retained in charge of the schools, when presently rumours began to reach me of being relieved and sent to command a division. General Pershing, as well as the staff officers about him, knew that my best repute was as a commander in the field. Later I learned too that his classmate, General Duncan, distinguished for effective field service in the Philippines, had said to General Pershing, "You are spoiling a good field soldier by keeping Bullard on those schools."

"At Headquarters, October 20, 1917 [Diary] I asked our Commander-in-Chief what he intended to do with me. He had it in mind to assign me to the command of the 1st Division. Later this plan was carried out, but not until I had been put for some time upon the French front to observe 'how it was done' in the trenches in contact with the enemy.

Coming in touch with the French, living with them, eating with them, there quickly came to light the French hope that the Americans would recruit, simply recruit,

94 PERSONALITIES AND REMINISCENCES OF THE WAR  
the French armies. The French division commander suggested this to me.

"Will you do it?" he asked.

"That," I answered, "is a question far above me, a question of policy with which I have nothing to do. It is the business of the Commander-in-Chief, General Pershing."

When a few days later I told General Pershing of the question of the French division commander, without waiting for me to state what answer I had given, he interrupted sharply, vehemently:

"And what did you say?"

I told him.

"You answered right," he said, showing a strange amount of feeling.

This at the time I accounted for by his statement given out to the French public some three months before, as his headquarters were removing from Paris to Chaumont. "The United States will put its troops on the battle front when it shall have formed an army worthy of the American people." His manner now, I thought, only retold his purpose—to form an army worthy of the American people and to have it under American command. To this he was wedded and remained faithful to the end. His offer of troops after the German drive of 1918 was temporary: made to meet the crisis. He regathered his troops under American command as soon as the crisis was past.

By the end of October, eight months after our declaration of war and four months after our first troops reached France—General Pershing still having sent no American troops into line against the enemy, the French impatience to see them there developed into

criticism and, I was told, even into intrigue against Pershing in the United States. To this were added criticism and hostility against Pershing by some American newspaper men in France who, of course, wanted to see things lively and have sensation, which they were not getting under Pershing's systematic, calm method of procedure to make an organization. This went so far as to produce even some little talk at the time about Pershing's being relieved of command.

"*December 23rd.* Back in the 1st Division with which I came over. Our Commander-in-Chief had said early in December that he might call for me to take the command of this division at any moment. It turned out as he said. On December 13th I was looking at some manœuvres of the division, and was informed that General Sibert had been ordered away. I felt that this meant my assignment, and so it turned out. I took command here on December 14th and General Sibert departed for the United States. Since that day I've been going at high rate of speed. Everyone and everything is working under heavy pressure. I think I've scared 'em all by telling them that they'd be 'relieved' without any hesitation upon the part of General Pershing if they did not 'deliver the goods'; they must succeed or would lose their commands. They are at work; I can vouch for that. I shall also organize in full and have a *machine* in the division, a machine that will work independently of the quality of man that turns the crank."

After his relief and before his departure to the United States, I did not see General Sibert and do not know how he then felt toward me. In meetings since the war he has shown no ill feeling. In all, I had given

no cause for any. In response to the inquiry, through the War Department, of his friends as to why he had been relieved, I heard some weeks later that General Pershing had answered, "In the interest of greater efficiency." General Sibert's dignified behaviour and valuable military service in the United States after his relief in France have held for him the respect of his comrades in the army and his country in general.

Making no pretensions to modesty, I held myself as competent as any other American officer on hand who might have received command of this division, which it was now understood was to be the first and representative American division to go against the enemy. I had passed through most of our military schools in the United States, West Point, the Post schools, a field-officers' course at the Leavenworth School of the Line, and the Army War College. Since graduation at West Point, I had had practically all the service that had fallen to American troops except the brief expedition to Vera Cruz in 1915 and the Pershing punitive expedition to northwestern Mexico in 1916. In France I had seen and put into operation the military training and instruction which we had gathered for our own schools from the French and the English. I had passed a period of observation and study upon the French front in Lorraine.

I nevertheless felt no over-confidence in taking command of the division. Experience had taught me that in the absence of opportunity for the exercise of higher command, failures are sure, but that notwithstanding this our government and our people made no allowance for this lack of opportunity. In the past they had insisted relentlessly upon instant relief from command

for an officer if he failed. Someone had said, "A common man blames someone else for his mistakes." Our people are made up of common men.

I felt, and repeatedly declared, that I would consider myself a great success and would be entirely content if I could command the 1st Division for six months. I hoped for no more. I was prepared for less. In a conversation with our Commander-in-Chief, October 20th, "I learn [Diary] that two of our general officers now in charge of important duties in our organization here in France are already showing themselves unable to meet the demands made upon them. Failing! So soon! Surely many of us will fail. And these two men not long ago spoke to me with so much self-confidence, one as though he expected promotion to higher command and hoped to have me serve under him. So it goes; a man can never judge himself." This incident scared me. It made me make up my mind not to delude myself with my own well-doing, to know that another would never look at me or my work with the lenient, gentle eye of myself, and to bear in mind that "Every way of a man seemeth right unto himself."

Hearing that I was to command a division, I wrote in my diary:

"*November 3rd, 1917.* I am trying hard to prepare myself to command it. I feel that it is to be a very difficult thing."

"*November 6th.* Alas! Failures are coming thick and fast. I wonder if I am to be among the number.—Not if live personal effort will prevent it. Yet I do not believe that I have the ability to make good; I feel that I am weak on knowing how. But here's starting to



learn. Hard work from now on, all day and a large part of the night."

In some way, probably in consequence of being able to speak a little French, the work assigned me since my arrival in France had steadily brought me with the French, and I had had no opportunity to see the war upon the British front. But in the schools I saw all the methods of instruction which we had gathered from that front. Being thrown so steadily with the French, who were devoted almost exclusively at this time to trench warfare, I had constantly to guard myself against purely defensive ideas of warfare, as illustrated in the trench warfare in France in the last half of 1917. I recalled from my boyhood the old Confederates' stories of their demoralization from being long besieged in Vicksburg. I recalled my own experience of seeing the utter discouragement and spiritlessness of a regiment of our regular army in the Philippines that had lived in trenches some five months, surrounded by even an inferior enemy. In spite of their present belief in and their adherence only to trench warfare, I could see that the French had in them no offensive spirit. General Pershing himself, the officers in charge of training at his headquarters, and the officers in charge of the various schools of instruction, were always very insistent upon open instead of trench warfare, and upon making the former the principle and base of all instruction. Indeed, too much acceptance from the French of only defensive trench methods of warfare had been one of the objections to General Sibert among General Pershing's headquarters officers. Those methods were all too suggestive of hopelessness. In talking with me about my assignment to command

the 1st Division, General Pershing himself [Diary, December 8th,] “was very urgent about being an optimist over conditions existing, and referred to President Wilson as his model in this matter. . . . He said nothing to indicate any speeding up to place our troops in campaign, except that he would give me command of the 1st Division in time for me to learn it and give me some practice with it before sending us to real action—war. From this I judge that he is thinking of the spring at furthest as a beginning for our troops. I cannot think that he, with all his ambition to succeed, is going to risk failure by allowing himself to be drawn into action until he is fully ready.”

## CHAPTER XI

### TRAINING IN FRANCE

THE United States Army before the war had developed a good system of general military training. All troops of our Regular Army were reasonably well trained, and no inconsiderable portion of our National Guard was fairly well trained, in the general essentials of such warfare as the world had known before the World War. Every war of consequence brings its new things in training and methods. The World War had brought countless such changes—changes that on the surface seemed completely to alter the methods of warfare; but before our declaration of war the determined pacifism of our government had effectually prevented any study by our army of these changes. The special tactical requirements of any war or campaign are the first things that stand out before any but veteran troops as most important; and they almost always seem a complete change of the principles of warfare. In fact, they are very rarely such; they are in general simply modifications of the old principles and methods. But these modifications are, nevertheless, of great import where the struggle is great and close.

The 1st Division which I accompanied to France came without knowledge of the modifications which the great war had brought. The first measures in training were therefore to supply this knowledge. And

the first step in this was the establishment of special schools to teach the theory. Next came the placing of American troops alongside of experienced Allied troops for the purpose of practical instruction. Very quickly, therefore, after landing, capable staff and line officers were sent to French and British fronts and to training areas to study and bring back their best methods of training. This practice was never relaxed through all the war. We were to have our own system, but it was not to exclude the good of theirs, and we were to keep an account of all new ways. At once, too, the infantry and all other troops of the 1st Division were sent to a special area in France and placed beside a trained French Division, the 47th Chasseurs. The artillery of the 1st Division, upon its arrival, was sent into a special area where practical shooting could be done for training in the kind of fire that seemed especially required by the war.

The first thing that impressed itself in our practical training beside our Allies was the immense emphasis placed by both French and British upon purely trench warfare, to which alone, for practically two years and a half, they had been accustomed. They seemed never to think that it would be possible to pass from trench to open warfare; they emphasized nothing but living and fighting in the trenches. From the first the directors of American training, mostly graduates of our Leavenworth schools, approved and supported by General Pershing, vigorously combated this attitude. They declared that the war would never be won by fighting in the trenches alone: that trench warfare should be taught only to the extent of making a beginning, and that the great emphasis should be laid in

training for open warfare. They encountered vigorous resistance among our own people, because the trenches were the things that seemed immediately before our troops, and most officers and men lost sight of the future in view of the immediate present. The fight was made longer by the resisters applying to the directors of training the ugly names of "highbrows" and "Leavenworth clique." In six months, however, by which time our schools had been well established, the insistence of the American directors and the changing conditions of warfare had made clear the correctness of their view; and offense, open warfare, became the guiding principle of American training in France.

Another difficulty in the way of putting the American idea into effect was a lack at first of space available for drills, manœuvres, and practices. The American habit and need of room everywhere and for everything was greater and stronger than the Frenchman's. But we soon obtained larger drill and practice spaces, although in the end we learned in this, as we also learned in the matter of fuel, to adapt ourselves to less than we ever at home imagined would suffice.

In the American Army the rifle has always been the essential weapon. The infantry of the 1st Division, in its training area at Gondrecourt, concerned itself at once with rifle ranges for practice in individual shooting. The fine 47th French Chasseurs beside us began to talk to us about the use of the hand grenade and the digging of trenches and accustoming ourselves to the use of the gas mask, asserting in substance that there was little use in warfare for the individual rifle or pistol; that the artillery would do all the shooting for the infantry; the infantryman would advance with his gun slung over his



shoulder and use grenades against machine-gun nests. Without gainsaying our very agreeable and tactful instructors, we adhered to our individual rifle shooting and learned all their grenade-throwing and gas work also. This had to be done very tactfully.

It was commonly said that if you took at this time a French or English soldier out of the trenches and into the open he felt like a man stripped of everything. From what I personally saw, I can believe this. In the training of the 1st Division with the 47th Chasseurs and with the 18th French Division a little later, an enormous system of trenches, covering miles and miles, was dug, at the expense of very great labour and patience, for the purpose of making the training realistic. In addition, the front of these trenches was covered with elaborate entanglements of barbed wire. Nothing was omitted or left to the imagination of the soldier. Almost everything except the actual bursting of shells or the passing of projectiles in his immediate neighbourhood was offered to the man undergoing instruction. Chambers containing gas, for the purpose of teaching the use of the gas mask to men entering them, were constructed in the form of dugouts, ordinary rooms of houses, apparently, not being considered sufficiently realistic. In the construction of these works the French soldiers spared no labour. They did it with as good will, apparently, as if they were constructing trenches for their own protection upon the actual line of battle; which is saying a good deal, for, as we all later learned, the French soldier was a wonderful trench digger. Wherever he stopped within reach of an enemy's shells he never rested until he was in a hole, and it may be said that he never rested elsewhere than in a hole.

It seems that the experience of the 1st Division in its training with the French was encountered by our succeeding American divisions with both the French and the English. It is truly remarkable that with our fixed idea of open fighting, these American divisions should have been able, as they were, to serve and train alongside of British and French troops without friction; especially in the case of the British, because while the French are well known for great tact and consideration, the British are considered a little more blunt and informal in impressing their ideas. Both French and British, too, at this time believed the Americans to be practically without any military training. They felt that once in contact with the enemy we would fall an easy prey to his greater special skill.

Little time was lost in beginning practical field instruction. But that—in the case of the first two or three divisions—was considerably interfered with by the necessity of taking from them many officers and men for the purpose of forming the great framework of the American Expeditionary Forces. With some division and subordinate commanders this necessity was not appreciated. They seemed to think that the Expeditionary Force could come over by whole units, that its organization could be fully foreseen before departure from the United States, and that their unit's sole aim and end was to get at once in contact with the enemy.

Along with the actual tactical training came, of necessity, actual practice for subordinate commanders in caring for the health, equipment, and discipline of their men, under the new conditions of living and training in cantonments and billets among French citizens,

such as no American had ever conceived. Equipment and clothing of all kinds not actually provided before starting from the United States were exceedingly difficult to obtain, and our young and inexperienced soldiers and officers found it extremely difficult to change their civilian habits concerning clothes and shoes to the soldier way. Why should one feel the necessity of calling for a shoe about two sizes wider and at least a size longer than he had been accustomed to wear? And why should one without experience of winter and wet and cold know the need to be for ever rubbing grease into his shoes? For the first time, too, they were coming in contact with the louse—the “cootie”—that buried itself in the seams of their clothes and defied all catching.

Particularly livening to the spirit of the training were the visits made by different officers of very high rank. Marshal Joffre, now retired from service, had wonderfully impressed the minds of Americans while in the United States. A visit from him stirred no less the American soldier in France. But Painlevé, under whose administration France was so plainly being honeycombed by traitors, moved no enthusiasm. Then came the remarkable little old Catholic soldier, De Castelnau, who had repulsed the Germans in eastern France at the very beginning of the war. Afterward came General Pétain and General Pershing, under whom these troops were to serve first and always against the enemy. The detail of the inspection by these men of all the places where the troops lived showed to soldiers the energy and indefatigableness of men who come to high command. They omitted nothing, they saw everybody and everything. In this respect, prob-

ably no man, no officer of any army, surpassed our own Commander-in-Chief. Before their departure to the United States after the armistice he personally inspected practically every one of the 2,000,000 men that we had in France.

As the training of the 1st Division proceeded in the atmosphere of war, close within sound of the enemy's guns, a juster appreciation seemed to come to all of what training for war really meant. Among these juster ideas was this: that the infantry is the army and that all other services are mere auxiliaries. The training of the infantry gave the American authorities more thought and worry than the training of all the other arms combined. It developed quickly the fact that the infantry organization with which we had come to France was wholly unadapted to the work of the war before us. Following this, quickly came the knowledge that not only had we not the organization, but we had not even the arms that infantry would have to bear in the war. No such great defects were discovered in the other two principal arms of the service: artillery and engineers.

The training also showed in American officers, except those of the very latest education, a love of tactical prescriptions, rules of thumb, a demand for orders that should fix the method of tactical procedure for all things. Nothing could have been worse than this last, but fortunately the most advanced thinkers of our army were in the Staff and prevented this error, after very considerable discussion and wrangling during the first two months.

Toward the end of the year the schools which had been established for the training of teachers began to



send competent instructors in the various specialties back to duty with the troops. They were received by the latter with open arms. Their manifest competence soon won the Battle of the Schools with everybody, and there was no longer any backwardness or objection to this product of the American forces in France, the schools.

The officers and men were billeted upon the inhabitants, living in spare rooms, shed rooms, stables, and lofts. As winter came, with its damp and cold, officers and men, accustomed in the United States to good fires, suffered much in such quarters. These hard conditions would ordinarily have caused suspension of military training. But the enemy was more threatening and more dangerous than the weather. As the end of the year 1917 approached, the Information Branch of the General Staffs of the Allies continually told us of the great early spring offensive of the Germans, who were being reinforced by the release of their soldiers from fighting the Russians, who had surrendered and quit. There was nothing for the Americans to do but continue their training no matter what the weather or what the suffering. No excuses could be accepted. Cold and suffering endured for the sake of drill were preferable to the prospect of defeat from lack of drill. In the last two weeks of 1917, in cold, hard December weather, the 1st Division were executing manoeuvres which required camping overnight, sleeping upon the ground, and standing in the open during hours and hours of waiting, chilled by winds after being wet with rain. The thing that utterly astounded me was that there was apparently little increase in the sick report in consequence of this exposure. By continuing the work



from the fall well up into the hard part of winter, men had perhaps become hardened. Concurrently with this training in severe weather, all the animals of the division, of which there were many thousand, were always upon half and at times quarter rations. Of course, they, too, suffered from the cold. At the same time, being exposed in stables which had for three years been used by French troops, they were infected by various diseases, one of the worst of which was a species of itch, or mange, which greatly reduced the vitality of the animals.

In the training of the division our headquarters and General Staff had laid especial stress on the fact that these were to be the first American troops to go in line against the enemy; that the eyes of all the Allies and of all the world would be especially upon them; and that if they failed the world would say that America would fail. This was the stimulus. They must not fail. For this reason the drill and the training were probably made the hardest that ever American troops were put through. No consideration of the peculiarities of officers, no personal considerations were allowed to interfere with the plan. It had been decided by General Pershing that the very best officers that could be made available should be given to the 1st Division of American troops to take its place in the line. Therefore this training was made a severe test of officers and non-commissioned officers. For any life, for any profession, an environment of that life or profession is necessary for its full progress of development. The United States Army in peace had been far from other armies of the world; and especially in this great war, by the action of our own government, its officers had

been kept from knowledge of the progress of military art and the development of military specialties. It was natural, then, that in this severe test it should be found that many officers had stagnated, were backward, had not kept pace with the developments of warfare, were out of date. Routine deadens. At best, in peace time, the life of officers and non-commissioned officers is a preparation, a mere practising at playing a rôle which in reality may never come to them. They for ever play at soldiers. The corresponding thing for a lawyer, say, would be for ever to practise in a moot-court, to play at law, not to practise law. Among officers and non-commissioned officers only the enthusiast, the devoted lover of his profession, could keep up his morale under such conditions. Therefore, in this real preparation for war, within hearing of the sounds of war, many officers and non-commissioned officers failed. The mere bearer of rank, commissioned or non-commissioned, could not rely upon the fact of that rank alone. Devotion, untiring energy, adaptability became the tests. Those who had not these qualities went under in the training. And it was rarely that those who had become stale could be moved or livened up by threats or entreaties. Against staleness the atmosphere of war alone was adequate; or if not, nothing else served.

## CHAPTER XII

### SUMMERALL

AMONG the changes of officers during my command of the 1st Division, there came to me one officer whom I knew well; and who afterward greatly distinguished himself—Summerall. I had known him since 1899, when I went with my regiment to a small station in the Philippine Islands that had for some four months been held in a state of siege by insurgent Filipinos. Here I found a lieutenant of artillery, Charles P. Summerall, commanding the only artillery at the station, a platoon of "Riley's Battery." As soon as the relief of the preceding station commander could be accomplished—on New Year's Day—with Summerall's artillery and two battalions of my infantry regiment, I broke out of the besieged place. As we made the first break in the enemy's lines, an opening was made for Summerall's artillery. He brought it up to the very infantry line and, under a rattling fire from the enemy, himself stood boldly forth in the open, directing the fire of his single piece and a Gatling gun. Everybody was concealed except this one man, Summerall. The infantry line, indeed, had lain down under the enemy's fire. Summerall was strutting up and down in the open, his chest was stuck out, and he was behaving as if he were on parade. It was an inspiring sight, and under its effect it was easy to lead the line of infantry

forward, run the enemy out of his position, and chase him for six or seven miles.

In two other expeditions in the Philippines I had him under my command and eye. I remember his work as in all respects most satisfying service, as satisfying as I ever saw rendered by officer or man. He was always prepared, always anxious to do, always on the right spot, always pushing with his guns so close to the infantry that they were practically in line with it. A soldier of mine who could sketch a little felt himself inspired by Summerall's conduct to put him in drawings of some battle scenes of the time. I still have them. After two or three of these expeditions and his very close artillery support of my infantry, a great confidence was established and a fine affection grew up between the two commands. It was Summerall's work, and was characteristic of the man. His comprehension of what artillery should do was so thorough and correct that his first thought was always of the infantry.

In the years of peace that followed the service in the Philippines we were not thrown together, but I heard of him. "Bullard's infantry would not so have deserted me," he said once when his battery, in a field manoeuvre, had been left without infantry support, open to capture. At the end of the World War, though he had himself always been an artilleryman, he was worshipped by infantrymen, by all infantrymen who served closely enough to know him.

On coming to the command of the 1st Division, I found an engineer officer commanding and instructing its artillery brigade. His regimental, battalion, ay, even many of his battery commanders, knew more about his duties than he, and they and the rest of the

division knew and felt it. To go to war with such an artillery commander, however able as an engineer, would have been a crime against the men whose lives were entrusted to me. I asked that he be replaced by a trained artillery officer, mentioning Generals Summerall and Lassiter. To my delight I got Summerall. When he came I found that in the years that I had not seen him, since the days of the Philippines, he had in no way changed. His zeal in the service, his sense of duty, left nothing to be desired. His industry knew no fatigue. He was all the time visiting and inspecting his command, and always inspiring, always most exacting as to fulfilment of duty by officers and men, uncompromising and unforgetting, yet always accepted by officers and men. They soon both feared and loved him. He possessed the quality of giving the severest reprimand in the quietest words. With the reprimand went no mercy; yet it roused no rebellion. The recipients seemed to feel its justice and accepted it. With such a faculty of reproof he secured correction.

Along with these military qualities he carried the highest qualities of manhood, loyalty, and honour. He seemed incapable of thinking or doing a dishonourable, disloyal, or crooked thing. For such conduct he had the highest contempt, which he did not hesitate to express. All men associated with him thus soon came to know him, and respect followed as surely as acquaintance. In all these things his force carried conviction and acceptance.

Summerall's loyalty to superiors I have never seen surpassed. Your purposes and plans adopted? Name them and they at once became his; not with truculence or flattery or any thought of self or advantage, but with



manly zeal for the cause, a will to do. In execution, in doing, with him both in his giving and in his requiring of others, there was never short measure. It was all done, done on time, and more. Of no man could you be more sure.

His sense of justice was as great as his sense of loyalty, honour, and duty. He let no man who merited it go unrecognized or unrewarded. No trouble was too great for him to try to secure such recognition or reward. He would talk or write until it was done. It is needless to say that here is found his popularity with the simple soldier. He never coddled, he sometimes even treated soldiers with a calm, uncompromising harshness, but the soldier that did something under Summerall was never forgotten. As a consequence of these qualities he was a man who was able to secure almost fanatical support and confidence from his inferiors. What he said should be done was done. Those who did it not from love or confidence did it from fear.

The combination of these qualities could but produce a wonderful career. They secured the confidence of everybody, high and low. Summerall in every way was a high type of the personal leader. His officers and soldiers got ready for him: they wanted to please and feared to displease him; and his career is an illustration of the truth that a man of conviction carries success and greatness in him. He entered the World War as a lieutenant colonel of artillery. He came out of it a major general commanding a corps, with the prospect, had the war lasted long enough to form a third or fourth army, of becoming a lieutenant general commanding an army.

With his help I had started a volunteer regiment

campaigning and fighting in the Philippines. I was particularly glad and the division was fortunate to have him come now, at the end of 1917, to command the artillery of this first American division to go against the enemy. From the day of his arrival the influence of a master artilleryman and commander was felt. Subordinates' feeling of superiority in artillery matters ceased; work increased, as did also for a while grumbling, but soon confidence and reliance succeeded the grumbling. Summerall was established with the division. There he was to maintain himself through seven months' hard service in the dark days on two battle fronts, and there, with my recommendation, he was to succeed me in command as I passed to a corps.

Of this soldier never had I a shadow of a doubt from the day that I came to know him, nor had those devoted and skilful artillerists, the French, from the day they saw him and his guns on the line beside them. At Soissons, as a major general, he fought his division with the fierceness of a fanatic. In this battle his division fought twice as long, and remained in line of battle facing the enemy two and a half times as long, as any other division, American or French, there taking part. In the Meuse-Argonne, I was told, he was equally fierce and driving, and in his eagerness, on the last day made the "break" of allowing, if not ordering, one of the divisions of his corps to cross the line of advance of one or more French divisions in order to press first into Sedan. I think the French forgave him, for they have continued to load his men with citations and decorations, and have granted especial favours to the American officer, General Frank Parker, commanding that division.

## CHAPTER XIII

### UNDER THE FRENCH IN LORRAINE

**C**ONDRECOURT, *December 28, 1917.* Yesterday I was suddenly called to our General Headquarters and informed that my division would be placed in the front line in about two weeks, and was told to get it ready. It must receive men and material and equipment, transportation—much. I have been at work upon this yesterday and to-day: it will mean at least two weeks' hard work. It is no small job, one on which it is easy to 'fall down.' I feel, however, that I have this division 'moving.' . . . I saw General Pershing yesterday. He is looking for results. He intends to have them. He will sacrifice any man who does not bring them."

With many inevitable delays, sacrifices, and changes my division had been preparing for this since August. It was to be business without compromising or without regard to persons or to things. The Russians were at this time surely proceeding toward a separate peace with the Germans, which would enable the Germans to bring enormous reinforcements to France, and create a threatening condition for the Allies in the early spring. The American forces in France were gaining somewhat in organization, supply, equipment, and training. But to me and to many others these gains at that time seemed disproportionately small to the coming threat of the enemy for the spring of 1918.

"I have [Diary] much difficulty in getting officers who know anything. All are untrained, and many of even our regular officers can never be worth anything in this war, unadaptable and immovable." Many of these officers had learned the old set methods of requisition and supply of our times of peace and it was extremely difficult to move them out of the old rut. It was easier in some cases to remove the officer entirely and supply his place with one more adaptable though less trained.

The machine of the American supply system had just been completed by the end of 1917. Like every machine, no matter how important, whether it would work would be known only after trial. The supply, equipment, and preparation of the first divisions to go against the enemy would constitute such a trial. While in one sense complete in itself, it had to be fitted also to the French supply machine, which was operating at the same time and in the same territory. This was naturally difficult. Of the two, Americans and French, it seemed to me at the time that the French were the more self-controlled, Americans being always more impatient and hasty. At the end of 1917, and even in the first two months of 1918, many of our supplies were still coming from our Allies. Though they were good, our men were not used to them and could hardly be made to accept them. How quickly, on what slight things human inadaptability is developed! We are creatures of habit.

"*January 8, 1918.* Am engaged in a hate-making campaign against the German. I am trying to imbue our soldiers with a determined hatred of them, their method, their purposes, and acts. It is justified by German conduct in Belgium and France. It is, besides,

a part of the preparation necessary. I believe that I shall succeed."

Long years of observation of American soldiers had taught me that they are never haters; that they are even in warfare very considerate and kindly toward their enemies. The history of the conduct of the Germans during the war showed cruelty and brutality, unnecessary in all cases and in many cases inexcusable. The enemy had thought, no doubt, that he could shorten the war by cruelty and frightfulness, but his cruelties had tremendously roused both English and French, the English even more than the French.

During the last half of 1917 rumours were reaching the American force of almost no "quarter" given by certain British troops during their raids against the Germans and in retaliation for German excesses. According to these rumours Australian troops were especially fierce. While the French were very vehement in declaring their hostility to the Germans and their intention to seize upon every occasion to retaliate with cruelties, as a matter of fact, when Germans fell into French hands, they were never treated with cruelty. The Frenchman was too kind-hearted. Nevertheless, the hatred of both French and British against the Germans seemed justified and made the fighting fierce.

Even in the quietest times and upon the quietest fronts, in the trenches, soldiers on neither side dared to expose themselves, even when hostilities were not in progress. A head, a hand, any sign of a human body shown above the trenches anywhere immediately drew the fire of the enemy. In other wars this hostility of individual men against one another has always been known to have no effect upon the general result of war,



and it was having none in this: it was only helping to fix the antagonisms and make peace and good will much harder to bring about than ever. But now there was no restraining the bitter feeling between the belligerents, and all methods of warfare, once inaugurated by one side, must be met by the like on the other side. The frightfulness inaugurated by the Germans could only be met by frightfulness by the Allies. Hatred preached by the Germans could only be resisted by giving like for like.

I deemed it especially necessary with our men, because many of them had been quite accustomed to Germans as fellow citizens at home in the United States. Not having found them cruel or brutal, they would here think that the Germans as an enemy had been lied about greatly by English and French. There was a consequent danger that, upon coming in contact with the Germans, American soldiers would be almost ready to fraternize with them, or, at least to expose themselves to the danger of being fired upon unexpectedly at any time according to the German-inaugurated system of individual killing on sight. The great German offensive promised for next spring required, moreover, every force of determination that could be brought to bear to resist it. Hate, a determination to kill and resist men who had introduced this system of frightfulness, was one of the forces of resistance. Accordingly, I had published to the troops during a long period of preparation and training every recent instance of German frightfulness and cruelty that came to my knowledge. This was done upon my own initiative and without any suggestion or pressure upon the part of our General Headquarters in France.

Of course, it had its effect, yet I was conscious always of meeting in the average American soldier a considerable amount of incredulity, for the simple reason that I have above mentioned, namely, that in his association with Germans in the United States he had not seen the cruelty and frightfulness which had unquestionably been exercised by the German forces in this war. So hard is personal experience to overcome. But two or three instances of unnecessary harshness with which Germans had treated some half-a-dozen Americans captured in their first raid in October had a strong effect. These cases were the unnecessary stabbing to death of one American soldier, and the caging of others and exposing them to public observation and contempt in certain places in Germany.

More powerful and of wider reach as a hate-maker was the impression produced by the President's far-published idea that the war was nothing else than a life-and-death struggle of democracy on the side of the Allies, against autocracy on the side of the Germans. Though I could never so see it myself nor divine its truth from the origin of the war, it was nevertheless a catching idea. It was widely echoed in the press and had a great effect among all the Allies (and especially among Americans) as something American, proposed by an American. We are nothing if not democratic. Until thrown with other peoples we little realize how extremely and fixedly so we are. Shorten the arm of Democracy? Take from them the people's rights? No consideration, no quarter to those who propose it! It was no hymn, but it was a word of hate as certainly fitted to stir American hatred as ever was the German hymn of hate to move the German people.

Altogether, the hate-making produced some effect upon our men. Nevertheless, in the following months of fighting we had little use of it. Beyond instant fire upon individuals exposing themselves, we encountered no German frightfulness or cruelty in warfare where I was. Poor psychologists of all but their own people, the Germans had perhaps found that it did not pay, and quit it. There was no other consideration to influence them. Their purpose to win the war shut out for them all lighter considerations of humanity in its conduct, if inhumanity were found to contribute to success: and they were always, until the very end of the war, in position to inflict on their enemies more cruelty, brutality, and frightfulness than they could themselves be made to suffer in retaliation.

"January 4th and 5th. I went with General Pershing's Chief of Staff up to the French sector where my division is to be sent. Our party was quite large: The Chief of Staff and two officers of his Operations Section, two French Mission officers, myself and my Chief of Staff. Our party had considerable misgivings as to how we would be received by the French general who commands and who was known to be hostile to Americans. Well, with a lot of French talk I slipped up on that fellow's blind side and we had little difficulty with him. It was French and Americans in better understanding." The "lot of French talk" referred to was not official. The French commander, who had been quite unyielding on a demand made by General Pershing as a *sine qua non* of agreement, invited us to dinner.

Of course, during the meal all official subjects were taboo, but, nevertheless, there is probably no people who as much as the French decide business questions

over dinners. They regard a dinner as the old saying does play: "You learn to do more with a man in a half hour of play than you can in a day of work." Knowing this, I devoted my whole attention to the commander of the French army to which my division was to be attached, General Debeney. General Pershing's Chief of Staff after the dinner remarked, "Bullard, with your French talk you played up to him bully, and you have helped to settle this question favourably." And so in effect it proved. There was no further difficulty; all American conditions were complied with. The 1st Division, and I commanding it, served under General Debeney for six months without the slightest friction, ever with the greatest good will and consideration upon the part of himself and his staff.

In anticipation of our going into the trenches with the French, their authorities were very insistent upon our having a great number of French liaison officers. The Americans, including myself, never quite understood the need of any great number of such officers, and we were trying to dodge them. It was a suggestion, most of us thought at the time, of espionage upon the American line of action, and we rather resented it. But subsequent days showed, at least to my satisfaction, that no unworthy purpose was contemplated by the French—that in all this they had no other motive but protection to themselves and usefulness to us. It is true that always the French War Office, through its liaison officers, kept itself accurately informed about American feeling and our methods and line of action. But near me, at least, the French liaison officers conducted themselves with such discretion and tact as never



to render themselves or the French War Office in the least degree disagreeable. They served a great purpose in helping to maintain good relations between the French authorities and people and the Americans, and in bringing Americans to understand the best way of living among the French without annoyance upon both sides. In many cases, also, in the beginning, trained French staff officers rendered military assistance of inestimable value to us.

Among the French liaison officers was one whom I had (against French as well as American orders) asked for by name—Henri Secheresse, a reserve officer who had been two or three times seriously wounded and who, when he came to service with me, was still unable on account of his wounds to do field duty. He was a business man whose knowledge of the French people and French customs was very valuable to me. He served for more than a year and a half as my personal aide. I felt as sure of his loyalty to me and to the American cause as I would have felt if he had been American. Always tactful, and with wonderful control over his feelings and his tongue, without being of the class of most highly educated French officers, he yet very valuably filled his purpose with both Americans and French. With a body broken and wounded in service, his good judgment kept him always prepared for duty, no matter how hard or unexpected. His fine judgment and discreet conduct kept him always agreeable, always in tune with the people about him. I know no officer, American or French, near me who served the common cause with more faithfulness and merit in his own way and humble grade than Lieutenant Henri Secheresse. In peace after the war before the passing world, he is



a greater man, director and proprietor of the Restaurant Laurent, on the celebrated Champs Elysées, Paris.

Regarding us still as very much in need of tutelage, the French rather pushed on us a tactical officer to help the tactical officer of the 1st Division in billeting and laying out the route of march of the 1st Division up to the trenches. For this we really needed and accepted him; but we did not want him "for good and all." Once with us, however, we could not at first, and at last would not for any consideration "shake" him. We found that we liked and needed him, and he, like almost all other French liaison officers that I saw, proved to be of valuable help. Between these officers and us there grew up fine and lasting comradeships that since the war have helped to keep French and Americans close together.

In the first days of the year 1918 came a period of five days' special training, the culmination and the end of the training period for the 1st Division. I can never forget it. I don't think that any man that passed through it could ever forget it. I don't believe that any man who passed through it and afterward went through the battles that followed in 1918 believed that he ever faced anything except death itself which would be harder to bear.

"*Gondrecourt, January 2nd.* Bad weather—snow and cold and wet—continues. Stuck last night in automobile in snowdrift on road returning from A. E. F. Headquarters and had to walk home, seven miles. But we are, nevertheless, 'getting things done.'"

"*January 8th.* Finished yesterday five days' trench manœuvres by brigade and division. Worst weather in which I ever saw troops work. The temperature

was near zero, Centigrade, most of the time, and on the last day it snowed, thawed, and rained. We were wet and muddy all over. How our soldiers ever will escape sickness, I do not know."

This last five days constituted, on account of the weather, the fiercest strain to which I ever saw troops subjected outside of the hardest battles. They began with rain, which changed into sleet and snow and slush, and lasted the entire five days without break. Men stood in the trenches and out in the open over shoe-tops in mud and snow and water; with the snow four or five inches deep upon the open ground; and from start to finish were never clear of these hardships. Ears, fingers, and noses were frozen; horses fell from cold and exhaustion, some dying upon the field. The men bore it better than the horses. They had before them the knowledge of the great coming offensive of the enemy. They must do it, they must maintain their spirits and their effort, and they did. The saving thing was the rolling kitchen. Until now the American troops had never had it. It stood beside the men in these five days of hardship with hot soup and coffee and hot foods—the one comfort and really the saving of the occasion. The horses had no such luck: already weakened by three weeks' short feed, many fell and perished.

Why did we do it? Because we had to, in order to save ourselves from a worse fate at the hands of a hard enemy who we knew—the whole world now knew—would, long before spring could give us weather for drilling in comfort, be driving his veteran troops in greater numbers than ever against our allied front. Serbia, Russia, Rumania, and Italy had all been

beaten. What next? We knew, and when. Time was not ours. Besides, nine months had now passed since we had put ourselves in the war and we were still there by declaration only. General Pershing and his entire staff were driving now to make good.

Thus finished our training. We were ready to go.

## CHAPTER XIV

### INTO THE LINE

THE day the 1st Division started to the front the ground was covered with snow that had melted and then at once frozen. The roads were a solid sheet of ice. Then came rain which smoothed this ice to a glassy surface on which neither the feet of animals nor the wheels of vehicles could take hold. Falling men and horses broke and scattered the columns. Entire teams went down at the same time upon the ice, struggling, panting, tangled in their harness, and almost uncontrollable. Vehicles by their sheer weight dragged the teams backward, pushed them forward—or sideways downhill, in confusion and danger. Vehicles, animals, and men were a struggling mass in blockade and delay along the road: for the first day of the march half of them were continually in the ditch. Upset wagons were righted and reloaded by men who were up to their knees in snow and water, soaked in the rain; the loads on wagons were soaked, because almost every wagon slid off the road, upset, and had to be unloaded and reloaded in the rain. It was a sight I never expect to see repeated.

Night came upon the first detachment when the tail of the train had made about a mile and a half. It was raining still and the snow was melting. The men of perhaps one third of the column might as well have slept in the houses from which they had started in the

morning, so little distance had they gained. The troops, with wet clothing and wet blankets, and animals with bruised bodies and strained muscles, suffered much, but as in the last five days' preparation, there was no turning back. The strong bodies of the American soldiers stood the suffering well; yet I doubt not that every one of them will bear the feelings and the effects of that night and that day to his last hour. Our American mules stood up well, but the horses which we had obtained from the French had passed already through three years of hardship in war, were weak, easily exhausted, and suffered greatly under the strain.

Darkness found the division widely scattered. I do not know how it slept or how it passed the night. I attempted ineffectually in an automobile to follow during a portion of the course. It was impossible. After a mile and a half or two miles I gave it up and returned to the place whence I had started in the morning. The trip had taken me in an automobile nearly half a day, with many risks of complete destruction of the automobile and danger to its driver.

The thing that struck me about this memorable day was that, while our soldiers did not know how to adapt themselves to the conditions or meet the hardships and labours encountered, yet, when they knew that it had to be done, stolidly but manfully they waded into the slush of snow and water up to the knees, well knowing that they would sleep, if sleep they could, in wet, perhaps frozen, clothes and blankets during the night. It was a good sign, a fit continuation of the five days' hard training. I felt perfectly sure that these soldiers were never afterward to encounter anything except death that would be harder to face than the labours



and exposure of this day. There was, however, in this movement one great relief which the troops as well as wagons appreciated. It was that for the first time in the history of the Army of the United States they had not to carry the killing burden of their heavy tentage. From this they were saved by the European system of billeting the troops upon the inhabitants. This, I am sure, has always helped European armies more than they ever have known, and lack of such a system has hobbled and weighted down almost to immobility the American.

The rain had sufficiently melted the ice upon the roads, and the following day of the march was easier.

To the staff of the division a trying thing was the many changes proposed by our mentors, the French staff officers, after the original plan was drawn up for the march toward the front. This seems almost characteristic of French orders, and is one to which Americans can least adapt themselves. The French seemed entirely willing, at any time, to change an order or a plan for any little improvement. The Americans prefer, after once adopting a plan or giving an order, to follow it out even if it be not absolutely the best or the most convenient. This difference of habit and view seemed to me to continue to the very end of military operations in the war.

I was taking only one half of the 1st Division into line against the enemy, the other half remaining in the Gondrecourt training area in rear. This was desirable for two reasons: First: The division was about twice as large as a French division, so that half of it could be more conveniently handled as a division by the French army with which we were to serve. Second: We had

now but one division ready to go on the line against the enemy.

The Germans, knowing that Americans were in France, had jeered us and had promised their own people to make short work of us when we should come on the line. It seemed probable that as soon as they should discover us in the trenches against them they might make a sudden hard effort to push us out, in order to justify their boast and produce the moral effect upon their own people of saying that they had knocked out the whole American force at a single blow. The halving of the division in the manner referred to above would enable us still to have the second half, the equivalent of a French or German division, fresh and ready to take its place against the enemy in case the first half were really forced out of line. But the forcing out never took place.

As the division came into the trenches for the first time, I did not see among the men any of that spirit of fierce expectation, anxiety to get at the enemy, of which writers about the war have sometimes told us. They were quiet and business-like, almost stolid. Even the newest of them met the hardships with the look and spirit of regulars. I thought with pride, "They are regulars." In fact, few were.

General Debeney, the commander of the French army in our new sector, had until recently been the chief of staff of General Pétain, commanding the bulk of the French in France. He was a typical-looking French officer: black hair, black moustache, military in deportment, and neat in dress; well kept, handsome, and of pleasing manners: very keen and alert, and with sharp but kindly eyes. Like Marshals Foch, Pétain,

Fayolle, and other distinguished French general officers, he had been a tactical instructor in the French military schools.

It was striking, by the way, how great was the number of teachers who became great generals in this war. Teaching begets confidence, the conviction that you are right—and the habit of delivering decisions in a tone of finality which itself inspires confidence. One remembers the words of the Samaritans about Jesus: "Is not this the son of the carpenter, Joseph? Behold, he speaks as one having authority." Debeney was such. While apparently never arbitrary, he always spoke as one sure and having authority, delivered his opinions in a way that somehow never suggested disagreeing. He had been so long beside General Pétain in the direction of the French armies in times of great stress that adversities never unsettled or ruffled him. He could receive ill news as quietly as good; and his judgment did not seem to be unsettled by either. After three months of continuous German threats and, I may say, increasing Allied suspense and doubt, a series of German raids along the entire French front inaugurated the great German offensive in March of 1918. The world knew that it would be fearful, and we were expecting it with dread. I was with Debeney as the news came in. He received it just about as he had a moment before received my invitation to dinner. He looked at it apparently as a pleasure. Yet he knew that the Allies were all on the defensive and he felt that they would be the first losers, perhaps even the final losers.

It was Debeney whom Pétain now took from this distant quiet sector to go to meet and stop that drive

after it had crashed through the 5th British Army and threatened to go on to the sea, separating the British and the French. And Debeney did it. Finding the enemy, he afterward told me, was like groping in the dark, so completely had the enemy captured or swept aside everything in his front. A staff officer of Debeney's, without escort, groping his way in the confusion to recover touch with the enemy, found the enemy indeed, near Montdidier—falling into his hands with despatches. These despatches directed to French troops at places at which they were not and had not reached caused the enemy to hesitate. Debeney profited by the hesitation and was ready in the right place at the enemy's next move.

From the first, General Debeney received me not as a division but as a corps commander, inviting me to the weekly conferences of his commanders and treating me, I must say, with even greater consideration than he treated them. This was the French general of whom we had ten days before expected an unsatisfactory reception and style of command. His treatment and style of command were helpful, almost paternal, but not patronizing. Such a man, it is needless to say, soon had a good hold upon us. We rarely saw him, probably soldiers in any number never saw him; yet the organization felt him.

*“Mesnil-la-Tour, January 18, 1918. To-day after long talk and much preparation extending over some weeks, the first half of the 1st Division is arriving in a quiet sector of the French front.”* (It was the plan of General Pershing in sending his troops against the enemy to place them first in the trenches with the veteran French in a quiet sector, thus gradually ac-



customing them, beside experienced soldiers, to the heavier duties to follow.) "I came up to-day with a portion of the division staff and am to-night installed in this little village where my headquarters are to be." (Mesnil-la-Tour is about halfway between St. Mihiel and Pont-à-Mousson, halfway between the Meuse and the Moselle. We were thus beginning to take up the position at the front which it was rumoured the American Army, when finally prepared to fight, would occupy.) "The half division will occupy a front against the enemy of between five and six kilometers, in low and muddy ground, in positions much inferior to those of the enemy facing us."

The marked superiority of the enemy's position was due to German military care and preparation before the war. The same superiority of position existed for the Germans at this time over practically the whole western battlefield in France. It was probably no chance occurrence, not a position taken up in an emergency of warfare. Before their first advance into France, the Germans had studied the terrain and selected it as dominating any by which their enemy could approach. Frenchmen have told me how German officers from their garrisons near the border had before the war been frequent and delighted and friendly, oh, friendly visitors to the French towns near them. Judging from their almost impregnable military positions in France at this time I doubt not, nor could any one doubt, that these practical German gentlemen had used every friendly visit to get military knowledge of the terrain, later to be turned, German-like, against their hosts.

There, then, we were—before a very superior hostile position; and method, foresight, and prevision on the



part of our enemy stood forth to our eyes on our very first sight of him. It made us think; it was enough to make us think. Opposite the left flank of our sector and right in the enemy's position, a hill, Montsec, bare and clean-cut, lifted its head and looked down into our trenches from end to end. From it nothing was hidden. Approaching our position before Montsec you felt as if you were under the eye of God, threatening and inescapable. Miles back, even as you emerge from the ancient Forêt de la Reine, lifting up your eyes to it, you involuntarily shrink, stoop, and double up, thinking to avoid its eye. Useless! Montsec, with its careful German soldier-observer, saw all. He traced our trenches and marked our roads, except the roads far back in the Forêt de la Reine; he easily spotted our artillery positions and knew our dumps of materials and ammunition. Of camouflage there were miles for the roads and acres for the gun positions, but they hid nothing from the eye of Montsec.

Near the foot of Montsec began a table-like hill that stretched away westward from our sector. This hill abutted against our west end in thick woods and low ground. Our sector here terminated in an impassable lake and was always safe against the enemy. But that safety was not what especially concerned me. The woods and the hill made his side safe against us—a very much worse condition. At times we could see and hear the enemy without ever being able to get at him. And from this point he was able to prepare raids almost undisturbed against our French friends on our left. The place was a thorn in my flesh to the last day that my division occupied this sector. I looked at the map and at the position daily, and never ceased to plan a

scheme to get at it. The great German offensive of the end of March, 1918, put an end to my scheme, as the division was moved far away to the northwest to meet this drive.

At the foot of this hill or series of hills, stretching away to our left, a French division held a position that was always open to raids from the enemy from the hill. It was necessary to hold this inferior position, the French thought, because it covered an approach to one of the frontier fortifications against Germany. To have lost this prominent great fort would have hurt the morale of the whole French people, they said. Holding the position at the foot of the hill was, nevertheless, a continual sacrifice. When changing reliefs of Frenchmen went into these trenches there was just one thing to do: to shut one's mind and commend one's self to God. Perhaps the enemy might not descend upon a man while his tour of duty lasted in those trenches. That was the only chance; if the enemy did descend, he could do as he pleased. Whenever he sought information from prisoners from this vicinity, he could always descend his hill and take them.

On the eastern end of our sector was a salient inclosing the village of Seicheprey and a wood. This salient also was always a temptation to the enemy for raids. The wood had in times past afforded concealment against his vision from Montsec, and we still thought of it as affording some concealment and some cover. But as a matter of fact, the wood had been shot down in three years of bombardment. This in the early days began from the mere fact that the wood did conceal the French, and the enemy, therefore, not seeing what was taking place in it, shelled it practically continuously.

The habit was on him and he shelled it still, although it had long ago been shot dead and bare. Upon this angle fell his most frequent attempts at raids. During our occupation of this sector we had the good luck always to repel his efforts successfully and even severely, but the American 26th Division that relieved our own here suffered a serious mishap.

The hard conditions at Seicheprey and the wood continued into the French sector upon our right, around a place known as Flirey. It was—or once was—a village, at the foot of a ridge along which now ran the German trenches. This ridge was crossed by what was once a great high-road leading directly toward the important fortifications of Toul. It had been an artery of the German advance, and the French, like the Germans around Seicheprey and the wood in our sector, had formed a habit of bombarding this ridge. The habit had been kept up until every foot of this ground for a couple of miles east and west had been ploughed over and reploughed by French shells. So heavy and destructive had been the French bombardment that as soon as the Germans had made a trench in one place it was at once destroyed by French fire, and the Germans had all their work to do over in another trench line, which promptly met the same fate. Thus their line, though ever remaining, had writhed like a wounded snake for three years. The French, on their side, in the ravines leading down from the German ridge, were simply driven into the bowels of the earth, and had been made again to become here what their forefathers had been before history began—cave dwellers, moles. The ravines' sides were profoundly and continuously chambered to the last foot.

At both ends, thus, our sector, while comparatively quiet, was equally unsafe and troubled. We shall see that the irrepressible activity of the American soldiers did not long permit our own part to remain quiet. As we take our position in the trenches, from the French position on our right some two hundred gas casualties are evacuated—our first object lesson.

The troops to our right were at first a French Moroccan division commanded by a French colonial officer, General Daugan. Originally the division was composed entirely of Moroccans with only French colonial officers, but now, reduced by the battles and hardships of three years of war, while still retaining the name Moroccan, they had gradually absorbed the likewise reduced remnants of other organizations, notably the *Légion Étrangère*, until the division had lost its distinctive Moroccan racial character. But while it had lost this, it had, by preserving its fierce way of fighting, given a greater and grimmer significance to the name Moroccan which it still held. It was one of the best, if not the best, of the fighting French divisions. We were to see the Moroccans later stemming the tide of German victory near Montdidier and again with us slowly turning that tide at Soissons.

Of this division it seemed to me the French always made cannon fodder. Wherever the fighting was worst, wherever the sacrifices heaviest, they were sent. This continued to the last, to the very day of the armistice, when I saw them on the road, under the French fighting general, Mangin, going to start the last dangerous offensive ordered (but never required) in the great war—the advance of a French army and my own Second American Army together to the eastward of Metz.



Under all its hardships and sacrifices the division never seemed to revolt, but, on the contrary, to take a fierce pride in being made cannon fodder in the sacrifice and slaughter they were called on to make and to suffer. The French authorities declined to hear or speak of it, but the Moroccan division were, we heard, in the habit of giving no quarter in battle, did not trouble themselves with prisoners. At Soissons, where this division took part side by side with my American IIIrd Corps in a great and successful battle, it was whispered that the Americans, at the end of the battle, lent the Moroccans some German prisoners.

Some days after the arrival of my division in the trenches I wrote: "The new situation to-night does not still seem real and like war to me, though cannon were roaring this afternoon. I suppose I must come to wounds and death before this war will seem to me real." A week later: "Somewhat slowly my division is getting settled in its duties. . . . We are losing a few men killed and wounded every day now. Three hundred or four hundred enemy shells fall upon our sector daily. We are really in the war a little at last."

"*January 27th.* I make trips almost daily among the troops; also send out staff officers to see. . . . I am having many small fretting things happening to try my patience. I must try to avoid them; indeed, it is necessary to avoid them." A little later: "My force has all the time been kept quite busy in trench duty, trench repair and construction, supply and training. We are learning the Boche ways and suffering somewhat as we learn. Personally I have been quite busy, some days I have hardly been able to budge from my office. Other days I have just broken away and gone



about in the division and in the trenches anyhow in spite of demands at the office." The thing was becoming real enough now.

The "small fretting things" were the questions presenting themselves to officers and soldiers unaccustomed to the new kind of life and service. It was trying but encouraging. They asked questions because they wanted to know, and knowing is the first step in efficiency. Notwithstanding the very elaborate and detailed training through which we had gone in anticipation of the reality of the trenches, hundreds of little things now before us we had never imagined. It was an illustration of what war really is. War can never be perfectly imagined or simulated, although that difficulty has apparently been very much reduced by the studious, painstaking German military mind. Everything goes to indicate that he omitted no motion, no little feature of war in his training for the reality.

Our arrival in line was a signal for friendly attentions by the French commanders of corps and divisions near us. These attentions the shrewd French knew contributed greatly to official good feeling. We Americans appreciated less than they the value of such things. I and the principal members of my division staff were soon invited to dinners at the adjacent French headquarters, and they were real dinners, too. That surprised me much. Americans are not cooks, and in the American Army's service in the West, in the Philippines, everywhere, the army officer was used to the plainest sort of camp and campaign living. We had expected to find the same among the French, especially after hearing so much of the hardships of service before we arrived. We thought, too, that we should find such great poverty

that good food was not to be expected. But this turned out to be not so. I do not mean that the food was rich or costly. It was not; but what it lacked in these respects was made up in the fine preparation by skilled French chefs. These chefs, like all Frenchmen, of whatever business in life, were caught by the draft and were found now in the Army. The chefs of the finest hotels of the greatest cities in the world—Paris, London, New York, San Francisco, Berlin even—were found in the French Army. However warlike these men may have felt in the beginning, as the terrors and slaughter of war became with service more and more evident to them, they were very glad indeed to accept details as cooks in headquarters messes, and there they were found. The French commander on our immediate right had the best field mess I have ever seen. I shall thank General Monroe in memory for all days to come for two or three good dinners given me later in the blackest days of the great German drive in the spring. Ah, Monroe, in addition to being a good soldier, you were a good liver! And you lent me a good cook who enabled me, with a body in pain and a stomach on strike, to remain, nevertheless, in the fight all the hard spring and summer of our nine months of battle in 1918.

A week before coming into the trenches I had written, "All preliminaries have been arranged [for entering the trenches under French guidance and temporary French command] and about sixty-five per cent. of the 1st Division commences moving in two or three days. I go up to arrive January 18th, but do not take command for an undetermined period, 'they say' a week. I shall have to watch that. The French seem very nice about it, but they are a bit afraid of us and

want to keep us under their tutelage as long as possible. In fact, we are literally beset with offers of guides and mentors and French liaison officers."

"*Mesnil-la-Tour, January 23rd.* Five days here, and little advance toward settlement [of command]. This lasted for nearly three weeks. The French commander, who, with his division, had just taken the place of the Moroccan division on our right, was loth to part with the tactical direction of the Americans. From staff officers at General Pershing's headquarters I later learned that other Allied commanders, English as well as French, showed an equal disinclination to part with the command of American forces wherever the latter fell under them. The American Commander-in-Chief was very careful to retain hold of these troops. It was his requirement, at least with commands which I exercised under the French, to keep a special wire from the commander of American troops to his own headquarters and to require full reports therefrom daily of what was passing—of all orders and all operations. It was apparent, from their disposition to hold on to us, that our Allies regarded us as babes in the woods, needing care. We were—and did. But after two weeks I insisted that the 1st Division were babes no longer and that they knew the woods.

"*February 10th.* Received tactical command of my division on the 5th and began harrying the enemy at once. Well, we stirred him up and he came back at us. I am glad I can say that it was he who 'came back,' not we. Of course, I lost men, but as we were the most active it seems probable that we made him lose more."

Here is how this scrap arose: Under the French occupation our sector had been very quiet. The French commander desired that the Americans occupy the sector equally quietly in order that the men might grow used to the trenches with not too much disturbance. As long, therefore, as the French commander had our tactical direction, that is, during the first two or three weeks, we were comparatively quiet. Only now and then an American soldier who could not control his curiosity sent up his hat above the trenches, thus attracting the attention of the enemy in a way quite unusual during the occupation of the French, who had long ago forgotten such foolishness. But in general the French order had been obeyed. It is doubtful that the enemy knew that the trenches were occupied by other than Frenchmen.

When I took over tactical command, I remembered the tradition of the loss of heart, aggressiveness, and morale of the Confederates shut up in the trenches at Vicksburg. I recalled my own observation of a regiment which had likewise been shut up in trenches in a village in the Philippines for some two or three months, losing all aggressiveness, all spirit of offence. I remembered, too, from my boyhood, a one-armed brother-in-law's licking a big two-armed opponent by starting the fight before the other fellow. I therefore let it be known that we were to "harry them up," and that I did not intend to let the aggressiveness of our men be lost. This was all that was needed.

The artilleryman with his cannon and the infantryman with rifle and machine gun took every chance for a shot at the enemy. This was quite a change from



previous conditions, as both the French and the Germans had heretofore been sent into these sectors not to fight but to rest. The enemy therefore knew at once that there had been some change, so he decided to make sure by a raid in which he could capture prisoners and learn really what had happened in the Mesnil-la-Tour sector of the late French lines. So he put on a raid, of course at the most vulnerable point of our line, up near Seicheprey. But our infantrymen there had profited by the teachings of our French trench instructors in the past few months. They read the signs before the hour of the raid, and when the enemy came into our trenches on a sudden dash, he was expected and he found them almost vacant. Before he could get out, our own men counter-attacked him, caught him at a disadvantage, and put him upon the run at once. He became tangled up in his own wire, lost two or three of his flame throwers, a machine gun or two, and some fifteen dead; and left a number of corpses hanging visibly in his own wire. The Germans had well prepared this raid, using all their devices and means therefore, including good shock troops specially trained for such work, flame throwers, and much artillery.

Our French friends were delighted. They had feared that we would be caught. It was a success, a thing above all important for new troops in the start of their activities. It was no great affair—probably two hundred men on each side engaged—but its inspiriting effect was one of the first things that helped to make the 1st Division what it afterward really became, a magnificent fighting machine. I was at the time proud enough of the performance of my men, but was made more proud when two months later came the report of



the loss on this same spot of some four hundred men of the division, the 26th American, that had, in relieving us in this sector, made such adverse reports upon our efficiency.

In the trenches against the enemy, the 1st Division was for long to be part of the 1st American Corps, commanded by General Hunter Liggett. Of him I had first heard years ago, at the end of the Geronimo Campaign, from his young wife, whose high opinion of her husband has somehow stuck in my mind. Perhaps, if her opinion had not been verified in his subsequent life, I would not to-day remember what she thought. Prophecies and omens are generally forgotten if they happen not to come true. Hers did.

I heard nothing of him for years, until someone told me that he had said that he was going to make himself a military "highbrow." He seems to have made good his word; for afterward, when I was sent to the Army War College, I found him its head.

What his weight or height is I do not know, but he strikes you as a tremendously big man, bulky, stout, of good-humoured, non-worried, cheerful face. His great bulk might impress you as a physical weakness. It was not. He was active enough; he went when it meant anything to go. He was strong and hard; I have seen a big horse fall with him, pitching him a great distance on a hard, rough road, from which he rose without sprain or injury. He was almost talkative, but never so much so as to take you easily into his confidence and tell you his plans. He kept, in the main, his own counsel; was generally very tactful, yet occasionally flung out an opposing view in a way that showed the vigour of his own opinions.

Liggett had the valuable faculty of seeing what was important and what not; and he did not waste his time or attention on what was not going to count. Faster and with less concern (yet without offending) than any other that I know, he could dismiss trifles or unimportant things; he just good-humouredly but effectively passed over them without notice, no matter who brought them up. In my opinion, this faculty, taken with his high military instruction, contributed much to make him a fit commander of the great army to which he at last came. It must have kept his plans and orders clear and simple.

Soon after his appearance in France at the head of a division, that division was wiped out, to make replacements for other divisions. This was usually the cause of the last grief to a division commander. I was surprised to see him take it with equanimity and a little later, with much interest, send me replacements for the 1st Division out of his broken command. No doubt he then already had vision or promise of a corps; knew that in helping the 1st Division he was helping his own command. We did not, however, see much of him while in line, because the 1st Division was assigned for fighting to a French corps in a French army, to the 1st American Corps only or mainly for supply; but especially because a private and special wire was laid to connect the 1st Division direct with General Pershing's own headquarters, thus somewhat cutting out General Liggett's headquarters. Nevertheless, the 1st Division and I had long to do with General Liggett; and both the division and I, owing to the peculiar arrangements just mentioned, were sometimes to be a little hardly "bumped" by the general who was afterward to become

the commander of the great First Army in succession to General Pershing in the battle of the Meuse-Argonne; for, he treated you as a man responsible for your acts.

His army struck the last great blow for the Americans. He knew how to do it.

## CHAPTER XV

### PATROLLING AND RAIDING

THE distance between the enemy's trenches and our own varied from fifty to five hundred yards. As everywhere upon the western front, this interval was No Man's Land. It was covered with a wilderness of barbed-wire entanglements, accumulated in more than three years of war and left in every shape in which wire could be entangled. Here and there in this interval were open spaces, open sometimes because intense artillery fire had completely destroyed the wire, and sometimes because they had never been wired. These were more properly No Man's Land. At night, as was usual over the whole front, both sides had small patrols in No Man's Land for the purpose of watching each other and preventing surprise, or of learning what was passing in the enemy's trenches near by.

This patrolling required men of keen wit, of courageous hearts and tremendously quick decision. It was a thing to which some men seemed to be naturally born. If not born to it, they could be brought to it only by the most careful and prolonged training. It was dangerous work, this groping in the dark, with the constant risk of staggering against the enemy or into his trenches; becoming entangled in the wire, or being discovered by alarms; or at any time catching the frequent bursts of machine-gun fire with which this area was covered. Above all was the danger of being discovered by the

brilliant lights which both sides sent into the air over these areas at all hours of the night; once discovered, the party would be fired upon at close range by marksmen or machine gunners set for the very purpose. It was extremely dangerous but very necessary work.

I had thought our country training in America and our independence of character would especially fit our soldiers for this work. We had had, as it were, a sort of tradition of Indian and partisan warfare; our little Regular Army had lived its life among Indians; and in the last of its military experiences in the Philippines and on the Mexican border almost all of its work had been in the nature of patrolling and partisan warfare. No doubt we did bring to No Man's Land some special fitness; yet it was not adequate. The tradition had not been sufficiently imparted to the countless number of young soldiers we were bringing against the enemy; the men of the Indian campaigns and the Mexican border were too few among us; there were not enough to leaven the lump.

One of the earliest of our patrolling efforts might easily have been a wonderful success had the commander not waited for a second sign when he already had one. He had been about to meet an enemy's patrol; he heard it first and hesitated, waiting to be sure. The hesitation cost him his opportunity and his life. His patrol was scattered or captured.

This little incident annoyed me very much, and I made of it a lesson to the entire division. But the disappointment was quickly forgotten in the pressure which I put upon the infantry to keep at the patrol work. Very soon infantrymen were getting out of the trenches everywhere and were boasting that they had



made No Man's Land their own. So quickly does the spirit of an enterprise rise with its prosecution! In a little while shrewd patrol leaders were crawling into the trenches of the enemy and coming back with the information that they were not entirely lined with Germans as we had believed. They soon felt that they could surprise their opponents and began to make plans to do it. They discovered, too, that the enemy was as war-weary as our Allies the French, and neglected often their trenches and their wire. Our doubt was gone, and the next step was to make raids.

In purpose and definition a trench raid differs in no wise from an old-time American "Jeb" Stuart cavalry raid. Both are sudden, swift dashes at the enemy on his own ground to get information, startle, demoralize, break up his arrangements, and, in his surprise or confusion, get away with the least loss. But there the similarity ceases. In their execution and nature the two widely differ. The old cavalry raid was, or at least was written of, as almost a picnic, a sort of jaunt prolonged for perhaps days around the enemy's position, without danger—a lot of fun.

Not so the trench raid. It is a short, terrible, crashing fight, a thing of a few rods and a few minutes, filled with danger and death. It is preceded and followed by a tornado of artillery fire that drives men into the earth as the only safety, from which they may not emerge at all—or emerge to death or capture. Its suddenness, its hand-to-hand deadly encounters, its carnage at close quarters with daggers, pistols, and fearful explosives, its shattering, bloody, merciless action, make it terrible to both raiders and raided. Well that it lasts but a few minutes: it cannot last more.

If a place seemed to invite a raid its occupants generally knew it, increased its strength, and took other pains, such as keeping quiet and out of sight, in order to deceive the enemy and successfully meet his raid if it came. Any but an experienced soldier was thus almost always deceived as to the amount of danger to be encountered in making a raid. It was generally found more deadly than expected, and the old-timers, British and French, had come to listen with a "fed-up" feeling to "straightening the line a bit," and "I personally don't believe we would meet much resistance," etc., when a raid was contemplated. In reality raids did little or no harm to the enemy and did not help to end the war, but they had two great values: they kept up the offensive spirit of men in the trenches and often obtained valuable indications about the enemy.

"The first [Diary] two or three raids that we made against the enemy might have been the making of war by the forces of the entire nation, so elaborate were the plans and preparations therefor. I never saw before and never again expect to see as much counsel and advice taken upon the subject of a military operation, great or small." As we were serving under French command, we sought the help of their experience and direction. French officers were sent to practise with our troops that were to execute the raid. We picked these French officers after as much discussion and inquiry as would be taken in the selection of a candidate for President of the United States, and they lived and worked directly with the troops that were to make the raid. Their advice was sought as if it were gospel, and no suggestion of theirs was ever overlooked. I must say that every one of them sent to work with us bore upon

his breast decorations that proved his fitness for like work with his own troops against the enemy. Often they bore also the scars of it upon their person.

The point of our own trenches at which our troops were to start and the point in the enemy's trenches at which we were to direct our efforts were very carefully selected after great thought, and then, on some spot far back of our own lines, both systems of trenches were carefully laid out and dug and their wire actually put up in order to make a ground of manœuvre for practice of the actual thing to be done. It took at least two weeks' work to prepare for the single raid, and the men who were to execute it were perhaps one half of the number who were employed in the preparation. When the system of practice trenches had been carefully completed on the manœuvre ground, our men were put in the trenches, each man in exactly the corresponding spot from which he was going to depart in the real trenches far to the front. Then at the given signal they went over the top, employing exactly the same methods and movements in the sham battle that they were expected to employ in the real fight, including the methods of passing our own wire entanglements and the enemy's. This was many times repeated, till every man knew his part.

In the first raid, involving from thirty to sixty men on our side, a whole division staff and all the headquarters were interested and concerned. And after all this planning and work this first raid, when it came to actual execution, was a complete failure. A single engineer party had not practised carrying the long tubes of explosives from the dump through the approach trenches to the spot where they were to be used.

In the real raid the tube broke and delayed things half an hour longer than the time set for the execution of the raid; so that our men never left their trenches. It was a sad disappointment. General Pershing had come to be a witness of the first effort, and he too was disappointed. But he knew that but one in three or four raids ever succeeded (our French mentors had emphasized that) and he was not critical: the experience would not be lost. Another consolation about it was that it must have confused the enemy tremendously in his judgment of what we were trying to do; and I hoped at least that on our next raids he would be equally undecided about what we were trying to do, so that we would catch him thus in confusion. In fact, it about turned out so, because our next raids, while no great wonders, were nevertheless successful.

The first plunge taken, thereafter plans for raids were always afoot. For this work, as for patrolling, special leaders or special qualifications were necessary. It took men of great courage and even fierceness of character. It took men who were ready to dash right up into the enemy's trenches, upon an enemy armed and ready. That is much; for it is one thing, assuredly, to stand afar off and fire at an enemy and another thing to close with him in a *corps à corps* as he waits for you. This is a return to the fierce and deadly fighting of ages ago. We found men, however, with the necessary qualifications.

In our first raids, volunteers had been taken; but later only those whose duty it was at the time to execute the raid. Nor were long elaborate preparations now necessary: the whole command got the correct idea in the first trials. From this, skill increased until its

culmination was reached it seemed to me in one in which a raiding party of my own old regiment, caught between its own and the enemy's barrage, crawled between the two to success and out again to safety, with the loss of one man and the capture of thirty of the enemy, and killing perhaps of as many more. Astonishing sometimes how soon men become warriors if not killed in the becoming. The French corps and army commanders under whom we were serving at last became quite complimentary. "The Americans took prisoners upon call," they said. Of course this was a bit exaggerated for politeness, but it was nearly true.



## CHAPTER XVI

### TRENCH LIFE

WHILE the 1st Division, thus in contact with the enemy, was learning things, it afforded a basis of observation and of "rubber-necking" to many Americans: officers and officials who felt that they *must* see the enemy. Sightseeing Americans of all kinds were down upon us daily, Major Generals and their staffs, newspaper men, Red Cross people, visiting United States Government officials, staff officers, moving-picture men—everybody that could reach France. I think it very likely that the enemy discovered us as quickly by these wandering groups of visitors as by our irresistible inclination to shoot.

The war-skilled French and English knew how to conceal such visitors. We had not yet learned. However, the enemy also began evidently to enjoy the visitors, because he began playfully to drop shells among them when on their trips they tried to get into the front-line trenches. This, together with the irritation of our advance troops over being shot at for sightseers, caused an abatement and restraint to be put upon the visitors. But all of this was a part of the game. In a month we had learned it, and we could handle visitors with as much ease as the best railroad handles its passengers. In this way we put through their sightseeing and we ourselves had the chance to

see a dozen at least of our own general officers who were afterward to distinguish themselves in the war.

Among them, too, came French officials especially interested in Americans: the principal among these, the most friendly and deeply interested, was the French Premier, Clemenceau, "The Tiger," saviour of French honour and of French national entity. He came in midwinter—a plain, short, stocky man, with a heavy grayish moustache, and wearing very plain clothes. He was old, but carried his many years lightly. He was of the roundheaded-type of Frenchmen, and yellow in complexion, but the yellowness did not seem to come from ill-health. His eye was clear and looked at you very straight. His face was round and seemed full-fleshed, except that in certain turns of his head you could see the approaching waste of old age—the angles and the lines of the skull showing through. His general look, I am sure, was not that which gave him the name of "The Tiger." It was kindly enough, yet certainly he had in his face something that suggested great firmness, ay, fierceness of purpose, a determination to fight for that purpose. It was a face that could be made hard, absolutely immovable. He was beyond his threescore and ten years, I was told, but he was remarkably active in person and moved about like a man of fifty. As he moved from one point of our lines to another, wherever he passed afoot he was well abreast of the most active of his party, but in the long half-day's tramp and ride whenever he sat for a few moments in the automobile beside me with nothing to demand his attention, he closed his eyes and slept a minute or two at a time, to awake at the next halt and be as alert as the best of us. He seemed to be able to go to sleep in half a minute.

I doubt not that this is what has brought him to his vigorous old age.

He was very approachable, friendly and affable with the French general officers whose lines he was visiting, and one could see even then, before the great strain of 1918, the tremendous respect and confidence in which he was held by these officers. They felt that after the weak-kneed governments that had preceded, they had a man who was going to fight.

While visiting my lines he was beside me afoot or in automobile and always speaking English. He told me that he had once lived in the United States. His talk of America and Americans, his manner with me and his treatment of members of my staff, all indicated a very thorough understanding of us. At dinner he discussed with me some of our great Americans, and he spoke with the utmost admiration of Andrew Jackson. The mention of the name brought to me a realization of what seemed to me a quite remarkable resemblance between the characters of the two men—fierce, fighting determination. “Mr. Clemenceau,” I said, “you are like Andrew Jackson, very like him.” “Ah, yes, perhaps,” he laughed, with evident pleasure, “but I never fought a duel on horseback”—a little envy in his tone. After he had gone I was told by some Frenchman of the party that he had fought two or three duels and was proud of the fact.

Before he left I offered him a drink of American whisky, and with the French officers accompanying him, he joined me in a thimbleful apiece. Some of them had evidently never tasted whisky before and made many faces over it. M. Clemenceau swallowed his without grimace, which made adequate denial of his assertion

that he, too, had never tasted it before. But he promised, as he looked at the now nearly empty bottle, to bring me, upon his next visit, a full one. I may write him soon and remind him of his promise and the dryness of the climate in which Americans now live in 1925.

Our Americans had practically all come to Europe thinking of war only as fighting—ever the way of the inexperienced. There is hardly any greater mistake. In reality, in war even the combat soldier finds twenty-nine days of the hardest, most disagreeable, even disgusting labour to one of strictly military work, fighting, or direct operation against the enemy. The 1st Division was a combat division. It went against the enemy in the trenches thinking only of fighting, and for three full weeks thought only of that. In that time the parts of the division in contact with the enemy were supplied by the others with ammunition, food, munitions, material, engineering tools, everything. All this had, of course, to be brought at night over roads through wet, muddy lowlands, in midwinter, in rain and melting snow.

With our minds ever upon the enemy, suddenly we found ourselves almost unable to supply the front line men with their needs, even with food. "Are you getting your meals all right up here in the front-line trenches?" "Oh, yes, sir, but they are sometimes a day or two late," was the soldier story at the time. The roads had become bottomless. Then we began the most painful efforts to save the roads or, by the construction of narrow-gauge railroads, to supplement them. In French sectors the personnel to do such work had always been amply supplied from men of inferior physique or

of greater age, who were unable to do service in combat organizations. As yet we had none such, although labour troops were being formed. I raised a great outcry for some of these, and ultimately obtained them; but as almost always happens, the American combat soldier had to rely most upon himself. Artillerymen were hard at work upon narrow-gauge roads for the movement of their ammunition; infantrymen and artillerymen upon the roads for the movement of their own food and other supplies.

Nothing but stone could stand the solvent effect of the continuous rain and mud in France, and even stone could not long resist. Under the continuous wet and the heavy loads they sought their level like water. The teams of horse-drawn vehicles had to bedoubled, and motor vehicles were mostly employed in pulling each other out of ruts. This lasted for about a month, when with the help of the arriving labour troops we rescued ourselves and eased the minds of the French corps and army commanders who, at the first sight of our roads, had cried out "*Mon Dieu, Mon Dieu!*" They were as greatly surprised at the swift results of these efforts as they were at the successful raids and patrols that the 1st Division were making.

Among the troops which came as labourers to us was a battalion of French-speaking Negroes from Louisiana and Mississippi, who greatly surprised and entertained our French official visitors, especially a member of the French Academy who came about this time.

Added to the work of putting the roads again in passable condition was that of digging new trenches, shelters, and dugouts, and the preparation of these dugouts for gas attacks in our advanced trenches.



I know of no duty which new troops dislike more than digging. When they have come to be willing to bear it they are veterans. Before our arrival the trenches here had been occupied by a handful of Frenchmen—war-weary men who had to rest. They omitted (and wisely) every physical exertion that was not absolutely necessary. The trenches were ill kept and the work of repairing them fell upon our new troops who were not yet impressed with the importance of the upkeep.

That part of this unaccustomed work which we took up first was the various measures for our protection against the enemy's gas. Just before we arrived in these trenches the little French division that had preceded us in the sector here had carried out from one small spot two hundred gas casualties. It was a lesson which was not neglected. Very quickly there followed upon our irrepressible American shooting and sight-seeing other gas attacks by the enemy. Under these our men were not long in being ready to tear up their blankets or anything else to veil their trenches and dugouts against gas. As a thing unknown and unaccustomed, it was the thing, of course, which we most feared. As an insidious method of producing casualties without greatly attracting attention, the enemy used it frequently, and as frequently—during the first month—caught our inexperienced young soldiers. After that we had learned. The troops had been impressed, and the "gas discipline" became good.

Outside of their prescribed training, men and officers were practising upon all occasions the use of the gas mask. At the first sign or sound of a gas alarm, on went their masks. "Gas! Gas!" screamed one night a head teamster peering in the dark at a staff officer on the

road practising with his mask. On went the masks of men and animals of the whole wagon train, while the officer, too startled and ashamed to own up to the excitement he had caused, sneaked off in the dark, leaving them to a good practice.

But the gassings the enemy was giving us were more than answered. The French gas which we were using was very deadly and the enemy had a wholesome fear of it. One of our raiding parties captured some Germans in their own trenches. Our party being very small and in a dangerous situation, were in a great hurry to return with their prisoners to our own trenches. At the risk of their lives and under threat of immediate death (which threats were never carried out) the German prisoners who were at the time without their gas masks broke from our guard, went into their dugouts, secured their own gas masks, and came out again to be carried off as prisoners. They never intended to be caught without their masks.

Gas was such a deadly and insidious thing that gas training for the protection of the men was carried out almost continuously. It was about the hardest thing for our people to learn. I myself was never able to fulfill the qualifications of a successful wearer of the gas mask. It seemed to me in all my trials and efforts that I should be smothered if I remained longer than three minutes in that gas mask. And it never made much difference what its improvements were. Under instruction it became quite common for our men not only to remain long periods of time, but to do heavy work, in the gas mask, and at last our gas school required a test of a baseball game in gas masks. And it was fulfilled.

As time passed, rumours, growing all the time more numerous and direct, came to us of a great German offensive in the early spring. As by this time the enemy would be reinforced by all of his troops that had formerly been employed against the Russians, these rumours unquestionably caused the Allies much apprehension. To meet this threatened drive the French with whom we were serving devised a new system of trench defence and began to put it in effect. It consisted in placing the line of real resistance to enemy attack beyond the reach of his *minenwerfers*, thus forcing him to attack the first line with his heavy *minenwerfers*, and then to bring up these under fire of our artillery to attack the second or real line of resistance. For two months and a half our time was very largely spent in the construction of the trenches, dugouts, and defences under this system. At the same time, the weather, from the middle of January to the first of April, was continuously wet and snowy, and men and officers were in the mud day and night. The cold was not very great and our men were reasonably protected against it by trench stoves which were found in sufficient quantity in the trenches or were furnished by the American Army after our arrival. This work, as I have before said, never appeared sufficiently necessary to our men, nor had they had sufficient experience in war to make them do it with a good will. Nevertheless, it was done.

The constant movement of parts of the command into the forward trenches, out again, and into the rear trenches and rest areas prevented for a long time effectual supervision of our new troops where they were living. Consequently, sanitary regulations and ob-

servances sometimes suffered greatly. Fortunately, the difference in climate between the United States and France was very marked. Neglect of sanitary arrangements which would have been so deadly there seemed almost harmless here, especially in winter. Notwithstanding what I considered the great carelessness of the French in this respect, they had managed to keep alive a great army three years. They were, sanitarily, much worse than we at our worst, but our worst did not last long. As soon as we were really informed of the neglects, a strong organization and stringent rules and inspections were established and enforced for their observance. Discipline secured the result.

Discipline indeed was becoming strong; an illustration:

"Is this a real gas alarm, or is it a gas drill?" asked one of my staff officers one day of a soldier near the front line who was busy putting on his mask at a gas alarm.

"Put on your mask," mumbled the soldier from behind his own mask, "put on your mask, you damn fool, and don't ask questions." Here was the real thing in discipline. He was teaching it to the officer, whom, however, he had not in the falling darkness recognized as such. I was never able to find this young man, or I would have caused him to be promoted.

For me this trench service brought an unwelcome remoteness from the life of the soldier. It seemed to me less a soldier's life than any I had ever known—less personal, less human, less intimate. This was not really due to the kind but to the greatness of the war, the numbers that the war involved. It was too big to be personal. Persons and personality were lost, swallowed up, engulfed in the myriads of men.



Again, before we entered the war I had noted in its literature that reached me a great absence of incidents, of happenings of human personal interest. Our own experience was now verifying this. The nerve strain of continual watchfulness and danger in contact with the enemy, we found, dehumanized men, benumbed them into dummies, mere things that ceased to act and feel like men. Humanity, and especially the humanity of our country, longs for, demands, in its war literature stories, personal incidents of human interest. Writers of war stories and soldiers who took part in the war at the front are now, after the war, supplying these incidents—at the expense of truth. It was doubtless this that moved a high staff officer to remark, when he received the order for our movement homeward after the armistice: “In one year from now there will be two million liars about this war in the United States.”

Two great troubles we were encountering in the trenches—too few baths and too many cooties. We more easily adapted ourselves to the first than to the second. Our French predecessors had left us some appliances for baths, some showers in the back areas, but had not left us their rolling laundries and “delousers.” These, however, we soon acquired, to our great relief.

Two bad habits we were also acquiring: salvage and camouflage. For persons, salvage is no bad habit, but as a military measure for armies it fastened itself upon us as a fad—and has not up to the present let go. We began in sector to salvage everything: tin cans, old shoes, old clothing, old blankets, none of which, with the exception of the shoes, could we ever induce our soldiers afterward to use. The war did not come sufficiently strong upon us to make this necessary



before the armistice came to relieve us. But the habit of salvage fixed itself upon us, and we salvaged mountains of stuff upon every front and every battlefield which we never had the transportation or the labour to remove. As to camouflage, as with some forms of animal and vegetable life, it became necessary for self-preservation. For this it was valuable and welcome. But it brought on an amusing, not a bad habit, of attempting to apply it in too many things. When there was no longer any need for it in the war we brought it away with us from Europe for use at home.

Not less remarkable than the case of the baths and the cooties was the soldier's adaptation of himself to a shortage of fresh air while in the trenches and in dugouts. We never in our own country for one moment supposed that we could live with so little as we had in our shelters and dugouts. When exposure to bullets or cannon projectiles was balanced against a shortage of air, or bad air, the latter was always taken and men still lived. Somehow, too, men learned to live with health in wet and mud and filth, in a way which they had never before thought possible. That I am inclined to believe was due to a favouring cool climate.

Harder, because more straining to the nerves and more dangerous, was the adaptation of the soldier to the constant sniping from camouflaged enemy snipers, to the startling flares and many-coloured lights that the enemy were constantly sending up above the trenches at night, and to the sudden and unexpected bursts of dangerous machine-gun fire. These things wore upon men more than the so-called shell shock of which we had heard so much in the beginning. It was an ever-recurring strain to the nerves.

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE MARCH OFFENSIVE

AS IT was to be the first of the American Army to meet the enemy, and would thus especially have the eyes of the world upon it, the 1st Division had been formed and trained in an especially careful and thorough manner. In the United States it had been said that the 1st Division's officers were to be made up of only "live wires." In France, in the long try-out of drill, supply, organization, and hard work, the weaklings and unsuitable had in the main been weeded out. This period of preparation had been a severe test, and a number even of the older, experienced and high-ranking officers, not to mention many of the inexperienced, were eliminated. In addition, the American G. H. Q. in France had taken pains to give to the 1st Division the best officers that it could find available. When, therefore, this division went into the trenches against the enemy, it was probably the best equipped, best officered, and best prepared for service that ever the United States sent to begin a war.

The staff of the division was composed of excellent officers, as was shown by the fact that, in the months of fighting that followed, these officers almost without exception passed to higher and still higher places in the American forces, the staff officers and their assistants of the division becoming chiefs of staff of corps or taking corresponding positions in corps and armies.

All the colonels commanding line regiments of the division became, later in the war, division or corps commanders. As a Frenchman remarked, the 1st Division was a veritable hotbed for the production of staff officers and of generals for higher commands. Nevertheless, after all these theoretical tests and tryouts in training, within two weeks other officers and men, in the actuality of real war, were found lacking. It was a proof that however theoretically well devised a machine may be, there is but one proof that it will work, and that is its actual working. In contact with the enemy we quickly came to know that we had learned but little about how to use our machine guns in defence. I was badly frightened to find that after nearly three weeks neither machine guns nor tank defences were complete. To my great relief the machine guns were finally placed by an American who had served in the British-Canadian forces and had now transferred to his own people. The little French 37 mm. gun, so accurate, so dear to Frenchmen, we never really knew until after the armistice.

The great size of the division and its organization, differing materially from those of the French divisions about us, seemed to cause much inconvenience to the French staff officers of corps and army in which we were serving. Apparently they didn't know how to handle it either. They broke up our organization to fit the French ideas and the French system. This continued for some two or three months, until upon my insistence the American division organization was left intact and we placed our troops with regard to organization and coherence. After all, too, I have a suspicion that the breaking up of our organization by the French

corps and army staffs was due not so much to the necessities of the case as to a desire to have the American forces in as small units as possible, scattered among the French and separated from American staff control as much and as long as possible. They wished to control: this was a way. The French staff and general officers certainly never for a long time believed, and even finally unwillingly accepted, that the American staff was capable of directing the operation of its troops. It is certain that the American Commander-in-Chief in France always from the first had difficulty to preserve his organization and to retain under American command his American forces. This was not always argued out in the open between American and French authorities, but subordinate American commanders could see that there was juggling by the French for a long time to try to retain control of the American forces in the way that I have said. The English, I am told, later did the same thing. The final firmness and determination of the American Commander-in-Chief overcame in both cases. If he had not succeeded we should have cut a sorry figure before the world in the war, with our men under British and French command.

After two months and a half all of my 1st Division had been put through the trenches in the quiet French sector and had "found themselves" at such work. Indeed, they had had too much of it. It was a struggle, in such long service in the trenches, to prevent them from losing their aggressiveness. At the end of these two and a half months I was vigorous in my feeling and expression that less than half this time was enough for trench warfare training for American troops, if their offensive spirit was to be fostered and maintained.



In the end, the great German offensive of March, 1918, was to bring us out of these trenches. When it did, it somehow brought us into the light of what the other portions of our American forces in France had been doing. In the trenches one sees only himself and what is immediately about him; he cannot see what is outside, what the rest of the world is doing. He becomes a mole who has no use for eyes. In the trenches General Pershing once asked me what I thought about some strategic move that our Allies were making upon another front. I not only had not thought about it but did not even know about it. All the time and thought and attention were given, had to be given, to my own trench job. I told him so. But the habit formed in the trenches stuck to me in the open. At the end of the war I found that during it I had had of time and ability, apart from my duty, just enough to enable me to gather up as souvenir—one bootjack! And I needed that.

On the news and relaxation, then, of our coming relief from our quiet sector, I began to have time to learn that other American divisions had likewise been strenuously preparing and were also now far advanced toward greater independence of action against the enemy.

Another change which had gradually been working was the operation of a corps organization for the several divisions that were now ready for this more independent service against the enemy. Our Ist Corps had been formed. We were moving a little.

Immediately after their terrifying drive against the Italians in the end of October, and after their successful conclusion of the war against the Russians, the



Germans began industriously to send out talk about a great offensive that they would make against the western front in the early spring of 1918. With their troops to be released from the Russian front, the Germans would outnumber the Entente and apply to the latter the same tactics they had applied with such success to the Italians and the Russians. This meant a tornado of *minenwerfer* fire followed by a crashing, smashing drive and pursuit, the thing devised by Von Hutier. They filled the world with this talk. They made no effort to keep the thing quiet. On the contrary, and in complete reversal of their previous habit, they let all their plans and preparations leak out, and especially hints on how extensive these were and how formidable would be the coming offensive. It would be fearful—the most colossal, most frightful thing ever. They shuddered at the destruction, slaughter, and horrors that it would bring, pitied poor mankind that would have to bear it all, and trembled for civilization. It was a plain effort to lead, to frighten, the Entente Allies into making peace now. It was no bad time to try it! To me it seemed that they had a better chance to succeed than any of our Allies would then or now admit. For this is how their peoples were thinking: "Russia has been beaten and is out of the war; Italy almost so. We are worn out and weary of war; we cannot bear it much longer. Thus far America is in the war by declaration only; nor do we see any encouraging sign that she will soon be in it to any adequate extent. Why fight on? We shall lose in the end." Before them, besides, was the winter period of military inactivity when the imaginations of men would have time to conjure up and dwell upon

the greater suffering, death, and terrors of further war. The German peace offensive was surely having some effect in Entente countries. It was being listened to. There were, I believe, no formal negotiations, but from the public discussion it was evident that terms and conditions were being considered by government officials on both sides.

“Much talk [Diary, January 12, 1918] about peace terms back and forth between Entente and Boche governmental officers, but our Allies will, in my opinion, have to reduce their terms very greatly before any peace will ever come.” Again (January 18th): “The English and the American governments, as represented by their mouthpieces, have apparently considerably modified their original war aims. The United States does not now demand the expulsion of the Hohenzollerns from Germany as a condition precedent to peace, and England seems no longer to demand anything more than the restoration of Belgium and Alsace-Lorraine.” This was a mere impression from hearing talk and reading the news, the rumours, and the communiqués of the day. On the side of the western Powers, the public talk as seen in the newspapers was directed toward fortifying their peoples to fight on. Yielding now, with Germany victorious in Russia, Rumania, and Italy, meant nothing less than the subjugation also of France and Great Britain, and they knew it. To Germany’s indirect proposals of peace Great Britain and France answered publicly with jeering and bravado; secretly both felt very grave. England was starving under the German submarine blockade. France’s man power was exhausted. There remained one unplayed card: America. This, with the certainty of

practical subjection to Germany if they yielded now, made them hold out.

Besides the prime purpose of trying to frighten their remaining enemies into making peace, the German General Staff and Government plainly had an alternative purpose in their peace offensive. It was to be able to assert to their own people that Germany had done her best to induce her enemies to make an end to the war now, to show that her enemies would not do so but were determined upon Germany's destruction. The first purpose failed. The second succeeded and was used by the German Government and General Staff with great skill and effect to hold the German people to the war, as they saw it, for the life of the nation.

All this could be felt in France. The non-intercourse of the bitterest war ever fought could not shut it out. The Germans continued their great preparations for the offensive, and the western Powers theirs to meet it.

Until late in the winter I could, nevertheless, not believe that the Germans would make this offensive against the western front, because at this stage of the war all of her allies were exhausted and war-weary. She herself was almost exhausted. If her offensive on the western front should prove a failure, nay, if it should not prove a complete success, her allies would fall away, and the war would come to a disastrous end for her. If, on the other hand, she stood on the defensive on the western front, she could, in her elaborate and strong system of trenches, stand off her enemies and convince her own people that they were fighting for their very lives, and thus hold them to the war indefinitely. Or if instead of taking the offensive on the

western front, she took it in Italy, she would make it very difficult for her enemies to meet her there, and if that offensive failed, it would involve no ill consequences to herself. The decision could not be reached in Italy. For these reasons, until late in the winter of 1917-1918, I did not believe that Germany would make, would be foolish enough to make, a great offensive upon the western front. I expressed these opinions among the American officers at the time and was laughed at. Then her known continued preparations made it perfectly clear that she did intend to make it. Germany did make it and we know the result. It accorded with my reasoning and expectation.

Beyond the feeling that the continuation of the war anywhere or anyhow would be serious, I did not regard the threatened offensive with any apprehension. From all the indications at the time there was no present promise that America would be in it to any serious extent. She was not putting forth any great effective effort. That was to be called out only upon the disaster to our European Allies when that offensive did come. To Frenchmen, questioning and impatient to see us thick upon the battle front, I answered, "It takes your whole nation with all of its industries, to make the war. Before we can join in it we must import into France practically a whole nation with its industries, too." It proved so.

About the middle of March there suddenly fell upon the Allies, over the whole western front from Switzerland to the channel, numerous, fierce German raids. The enemy was feeling us. "It is on," said General Debeney. He knew the signs. In a few days fell the awful German blow upon the British Fifth Army, annihilating it, scat-



tering it, sweeping it away. The French had hardly been touched, but the whole nation gave a cry of bewilderment and pain. They had expected reverses, but nothing so great as this. Courageous, war-like fighting men they always have shown themselves to be, but I could see their shock. Some days afterward I spoke to an officer of the French Army, internationally noted for his courage and daring; he could not control himself even to talk to me. He wandered and was beside himself. M. Clemenceau was smiling, and courageously declaring himself "delighted with the wonderful resistance which had been made by the English." His words encouraged other men, but he did not fool anybody, not even the simplest French soldier.

The whole Allied world, especially America, was shocked beyond measure at the might of this blow. The Italian defeat of the previous October was nothing beside it, a trifle, remote and far away. Criticism was lost in terror and in the urgency of action to meet the disaster. Its terribleness, the menace that it carried, did for America something which all the talk and persuasion, or all the previous advertised purposes of the enemy to enslave the world had never sufficiently done—it aroused the American people to a comprehension, for the first time, of the danger of an immediate complete victory over all Europe by the Germans. Until this time they had regarded this possibility as they had in the beginning regarded the possibility of the World War—it would not be because it could not be! Until then the American forces in France had been systematically organizing and training, one may say, almost at their ease. Now this had to stop. Fighting had to be done at once, or it would be too late. Now,



for the first time, as we were not yet sufficiently organized for conducting operations ourselves, General Pershing gave over to General Pétain the direction and command of all American forces in France. It was but temporary. This was distinctly understood. A crisis was upon the world. When that crisis was past, a few months later, the American Commander-in-Chief was again quickly to gather control of his forces into his own hands.

The fearful blow brought unity of Allied command. Nothing else would ever have been able to do so. To no other reason, to no person's persuasion or influence or personality, is it to be attributed.

A few days now and I, far down upon the Alsace-Lorraine front, began to see long, calm processions of French troops going northwest to fill the great gap. The world hears of the excitable Frenchmen. I was struck now by the singularly unmoved looks of their men. They were very quiet, very serious, with the air of veterans who face everything. It was an unforgettable, an admirable spectacle of men who had widely been looked upon as volatile, decayed, even degenerate. It looked to me as if they knew that they were going to sacrifice but that they were going.

And we were soon to join them. The 1st of April saw another American division, not quite so experienced as ourselves, come to relieve us and to let us speed on with the long French columns toward the northwest.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### RELIEF FROM THE QUIET SECTOR

OUR relief, our pulling out of contact with the enemy, was not easily done. Doing anything in France always involved consultation between two authorities, French and American, and the devising of a plan which would be acceptable to both—never an easy thing. The plan to pull out began in one way and ended in another. We were first ordered to spread out and then to contract. Doing either in the presence of the enemy is dangerous, and doing both caused care, work, and delay. But both were done with a good will because the 1st Division was anxious to “get in it” in the northwest, and this, we knew, was preliminary thereto. Everybody was generous and helpful to our relief. The 26th Division, however, commanded by General Clarence Edwards was so fault-finding and officially critical of our shortcomings, and made such bad reports of us to our common military superiors, that for long afterward we were kept explaining, fighting our own people behind while we fought the enemy in front.

I had personally taken great pains to try to avoid giving any excuse for adverse reports. Before the arrival of the 26th Division I had called together all the senior officers of my own division, warning them that adverse criticism was to be expected from the relieving division and cautioning them to be not only careful but helpful and generous in turning over to their

successors. At the time of the relief, I followed, and all the indications were that my officers followed, my advice to them. We welcomed the 26th Division everywhere, fed them in some places (in person I saw to the rationing of one battalion or regiment whose commander vehemently declared that it was "starving"); provided them with ammunition and equipped them with many essential articles that they had not. They may have appreciated all of this—I don't know—but I do know that they did not fail to note and report us for all faults and shortcomings that we had committed and many that we had not committed. All these adverse reports I had to answer at great length to superior authority at a most straining and troublous time—when we were meeting a victorious, jubilant enemy.

It was altogether the most irritating experience of my life. It was a vicious blow from behind. It may, of course, be said that observers from corps or higher headquarters made the reports, but it is a curious fact that the 1st Division had twice before been, and was many times afterward, relieved under like observation without any such reports.

Almost at the end of the affair General Pershing passed my way, and apparently coming or having come to a just understanding of the matter, showed, for him, much impatience.

"Drop it," he said, "drop it; don't spend your time on it."

This satisfied me. Eventually there were signs that the reports "boomeranged." Certainly except for our offended feelings, my division and I suffered little from it. That division remained and is to-day still "The First."

But the relief of the division had proceeded. In its last half the enemy seasoned the occasion with gas and shrapnel. He was disagreeable in bidding us good-bye. I don't blame him; we had tried in our stay to make ourselves disagreeable to him.

## CHAPTER XIX

### OFF TO THE BATTLE FRONT

WE WERE out at last. A moment to gather ourselves, and we were to be off by rail to the northwest to help fill the great gap left by the British Fifth Army. Never a commander received an order more gladly or started on a service to which he looked forward with more lively anticipation. Never, I felt, had a duty found me personally better prepared in body and mind. In body especially how good and fit I felt! On this latter I was congratulating myself on the last afternoon before starting. The next morning at 5 o'clock on a turn in my cot, a sharp pain caught me in my shoulder. In an hour I was hauled to the hospital in excruciating pain—neuritis! Four days and nights of suffering and I “jumped” the hospital and followed my departed division to the northwest, carrying still that agony of neuritis and carrying it, little abated, through all the hard fighting of the spring and summer of 1918, carrying it until I was a shadow.

All my life I had known sickness and suffering; nothing equal to this. But for it a livelier story I am sure would have been enacted to be written of the war where I was.

By rail over a circuitous route far from the battle front (made necessary by the Germans' present disposition to make sudden violent drives into the Allied front) my division had preceded me to Gisors, northwest



of Paris. In my weakness from pain and suffering, as sensitive as a baby to the cold, damp French atmosphere, I yet made the trip easily, travelling by automobile and wrapped in a great French wolfskin coat. God bless the Frenchman, for he it was, I hear, who first gave us the automobile; and God bless the French wolf, for he it was who gave me the great coat. By these two things I lived through the work and hardship of all the war of 1918: by day waking and working in one; by night waking and sleeping, secure from dampness and cold, in the other.

The impulse of the enemy in his rush on the British Fifth Army had spent itself. His advance had reached its limit and could go no farther without a further gathering of his forces and taking a new impulse. The French First Army, Debeney's, under whom we had been serving, had succeeded in placing themselves at this opportune moment in front of the breathless victors, and these were brought to a halt. It was a proud day for Debeney. The enemy had been stabilized, forced again into the trenches, facing here west, menacingly near the English Channel and threateningly placed for any push to break through the Allied line and reach that Channel, separating the British and French armies—a manœuvre that would have ended it for the French at least, and probably also for the British. Americans, we were thinking with shame in this crisis, were not yet sufficiently in the war to be involved in such a defeat. The eyes of the Allied world were thus justly turned in terror on this spot.

The enemy was at Montdidier and near Amiens, in a very advantageous position to push his advance west toward the English Channel along the south bank

of the Somme River. Attempting this, he would be greatly favoured by this river's making difficult any coöperation between the French on the south and British on the north of the Somme; and he would not have far or long to encounter even this hobbled co-operation before he would reach the English Channel and win out. The Allies knew the danger; everybody was looking for the next move to be here. The English were stubbornly fighting, as Marshal Haig said, "with their backs to the wall"; and the French, anticipating such an enemy success, were feverishly digging a new line of defensive trenches well south of the river, facing north. The cause was in the balance and trembling.

Where would we be put? For a few days until this should be decided, where we were detrained there we were halted for a few days in the forming reserve army of the French, under General Micheler. It was known that we should again serve in line against the enemy with the French, because we were the only American troops near. There was no higher American command near to be over us, and the English were not in sight—captured, killed, or pushed aside, so far as we knew, to the north.

The next fighting was expected in the open—"warfare of movement" as the French say. Now for preparation for it after two months and half in the trenches.

At it we went with zest in all units, covering fields and roads in all-day drills. Everything new in tactics that we could hear of, whether of the Allies or of the enemy, was tried. All thoughts were on one subject: to meet the enemy in the open in the traditional American way. At the same time, the condition of the command was carefully looked to by the French army

commander, General Micheler, under whom we had temporarily come.

Our artillery horses, reduced first by half rations and hard training of months ago, then by the exposure, hard work, and inexperienced handling in the mud of our last sector, were far from being in fit condition for combat service, especially open warfare. General Micheler discovered this and was trying to hold us back in his group of reserves. Like every other French commander that I saw, once he got his hands on a full, fresh American division, he could not bear to think of parting with it. We had started out to meet the enemy and were determined not to be turned away.

General Summerall, my artillery commander, and I attended General Micheler in his personal inspection. The horses were plainly much run down; Summerall and I, nevertheless, put up a great bluff about these horses being "just naturally raw-boned—that style of thin horses which we have in America, which never look fat." We kept up this talk during the whole of the inspection and would probably have succeeded in convincing General Micheler, if a small detachment of mounted men belonging to this artillery battalion had not started to cross the inspection field just in front of the general. We were vigorously plying the general with our assurances that he did not know the American horses, that they always looked thin and lanky like these beasts before us, that these were all right and very spirited and strong. Just then, before the eyes of all of us, a poor starved, worn-out horse in this detachment fell down and was wholly unable to rise. It was a deadly moment—an awful catch. But in spite of this we got the best of it. When it came to

argument on paper before our French superiors the horses could not be put on paper to show themselves up. I outwrote General Micheler and won the case. Besides, the need for us at the front was too great for us to be detained back here.

After a great test manœuvre in open warfare, in which we were found quite proficient, it was decided to send us on toward the enemy.

General Pershing witnessed the test manœuvre. After it he had the officers of the division assembled at my headquarters and spoke to them. All non-American officers were excluded. He was going to talk to Americans only. It was not oratory. He is not, or at least was not then, an orator. He halted in his speech, after every few words saying "eh, eh, eh." But he had a message and he gave it. It was an earnest but not a dramatic speech, as many, after the stirring events that followed, tried to make it out. I am told that General Pershing himself now, in 1921, says that on this occasion he was deeply moved by the import of impending mighty events. If so, then I am inclined to believe that he, too, sees more in the occasion by hindsight than he saw by foresight. His message, given in his terse, business-like way, was simple enough. It was, in substance: "You have just had a test of efficiency and met it. I am gratified. I am confident that you will likewise meet every test put upon you. You have been observed by a high French commander and other high French officers and been commended. You are now to go against a victorious enemy under new and harder conditions. All our Allies will be watching to see how you conduct yourselves. I am confident that you will meet their best hope and my



expectation for you. In your training you have been made by my orders to adhere to American traditions and methods. You must hold to these in your fighting and in all your future action against the enemy. They are ours, right, sane, reliable, and will win."

These were all natural things to say. They were hardly new to his hearers. His training methods had long before this brought their minds in line with his; his thoughts were their thoughts on this subject. In after months the occasion appeared more historical than it at the time seemed, and men were asking what General Pershing had said. Few could remember. The very naturalness of what he said kept it from being especially marked for memory by his hearers.

A march of three days brought us immediately in rear of the position we were to occupy, facing the enemy. These days were memorable to me for three things. First, our "raw-boned" horses really held out well, and we made good our bluff to General Micheler; second, the complaints and criticism lately made against us upon our relief from our last sector were being made to recoil upon the heads of those who had originated them; and third, I myself suffered torments with my neuritis in the damp and the cold of the French spring.

On approaching the line, I found with satisfaction that we were to serve again in the army of General Debeney, under whom we had been in our last sector. He had preceded us here. It was his army that had stopped the Boche just west of Montdidier. After a few days we were to come into the corps of the French General Vandenburg, an older and very broken officer, but a fine soldier, whom we all soon came to love for his earnestness and his careful, helpful way toward us.



He had been shot in the leg and could hardly walk, and in the mouth and could hardly talk; but he was very active and always instructive. His earnestness, patience, and consideration obtained from Americans a prompt and willing response. Not less helpful and considerate, both officially and personally, were all our French Allies nearby.

"But I have one complaint to make against the French colonial division that preceded us here," I said to the French corps commander.

He looked very serious and troubled.

"They drank up every drop of wine in the sector."

Relieved, the general proudly declared that these colonials had only proved themselves good Frenchmen.

He was right. "*Pas de pinard, pas de soldat*" (no wine, no soldier), unanimously declared French soldiers. The French could not have continued the war without it, nor for that matter, could the English. Both provided and issued freely wine or other liquor to their soldiers. It consoled, cheered, and braced them for their hardships and labours. It stayed their spirits in times of great stress. It gave them physical courage to face death in the fearful "jump-off." Miss Jane Addams and other American ladies discovered this governmental approval of the use of liquor and were shocked. Liquor was never issued to Americans: but, we may as well admit it, Americans never experienced the awful strain the war brought to British and French.

For one whole month after we here took our place in line it was practically one continuous fight, sometimes almost a battle. As always with their experienced soldiers, the French had laid out but had only partially dug an elaborate system of defensive trenches.

The bulk of the digging was for us. We learned it with distaste, not to say hate. Under fire any man will dig, but to march up night after night, as now, from the rear to dig reserve positions and approach trenches! It's a hard job. But at it we had to go, because the new Allied commander Foch, was not yet ready to try the offensive.

Indeed, the Allies were scared half out of their skins at the prospect of a possible German offensive, and the British especially, just a little to the north, were fighting with their backs to the wall. We were scarcely in our new sector before we discovered an enemy activity the like of which we had never known, and daily our willingness to dig increased. Our men and officers had already thoroughly learned the defence method of trench warfare, and now, with the hope and prospect of open warfare, we took up open-warfare instruction again for the troops that were not actually in the trenches. The staff, too, now had learned to function well. I shortly had the greatest confidence in all the division's operations.

As the trench system was not complete upon our first coming up to the lines, our relief of the French division (or two of them, as I remember) had to be accomplished with unusual care. It was done at night, of course, to avoid exposure in daylight to the enemy's very active artillery fire. Our new sector was more open and level than our old, and our French predecessors had not had time, as in the old, to cover roads and approaches, artillery positions and infantry trenches, with an all-pervading camouflage. All this made observation of the roads and of the circulation behind the line much easier for the enemy and more

dangerous for us. Our men had consequently to be taught additional care in concealment, both in their work in the sector and in making reliefs. But as danger was a better teacher than exhortation, they soon learned.

In our last sector, near the Franco-German frontier, the population was of a mixed German and French strain. We had come now into a country wholly French, and had not therefore as much fear of spies and informers as on our previous front. But the imagination of our soldiers was lively, and they still attributed to the German enemy a foreknowledge of what we had in our minds that was nothing short of omniscience. If he fired at all during a relief, we could not make it without the troops firmly believing that the enemy had discovered it and was pouring upon us the heaviest fire of which he was capable. It is curious anyhow, isn't it, how there never has been any such heavy rain of fire before and never could be again—in the opinion of the man under it at the time?

## CHAPTER XX

### MESNIL-ST. FIRMIN

THE division combat headquarters were established at the village of Mesnil-St. Firmin, nearer to the enemy than ever before, the supply and administration section of the headquarters being farther to the rear.

Mesnil-St. Firmin stood in the open, upon a highway which ran perpendicularly into the enemy's position at Montdidier. A mile behind Mesnil-St. Firmin lay a railway station and one ammunition depot, objects of the enemy's earnest attention, so that we were kept under the shriek of his passing shells. The ammunition dump he at last exploded, and the railway station was wrecked though never put entirely out of business. At the edge of the village the highway was intersected by a cross-road, which of course attracted the enemy's artillery fire and brought the exploding projectiles down at our side and sometimes in our midst. They caused much fright, but did little damage. Men afoot learned to circumvent, and men in vehicles to dash at their best speed past this place and all such places. Byways, indeed, not the highways, became in this way the favourite courses of travel near the front.

The village buildings in this region were for the most part lath and mud plaster, dry and cracking. When a shell fell among them the shattering of walls was phenomenal, and the cloud of dust raised made one think of a volcanic eruption. The wreck of these villages under

the enemy's fire—Mesnil-St. Firmin not excepted—was pitifully quick and complete. Anywhere near them one was safe only when well underground. Fortunately, the earth being largely soft chalk, deep cellars and even tremendous subterranean passages and caverns, constructed by men in the struggles of long, long ago, gave us ready cover.

My combat staff and I, in the Manor House of Mesnil-St. Firmin, were glad to be in such a cellar. Wet? It was reeking; but how much better it is to be only wet, not dead! And now again I blessed my French wolfskin great-coat. Wrapped in it, I lay down in my deep cellar and knew not the dampness. And, the air down there? It was scarce! How, anyhow, could one do on as little air as Americans learned to in their dugouts, cellars, and caverns in the trenches of France? I do not know. But we all knew that we got along better with the little air we had in these caverns than with the plentiful supply on top of the ground. The air on top was spoiled with too great a mixture of bullets, bombs, shells, and gas.

So we all took to the Manor House deep cellar; and the Manor House owner, if he ever returned to his own, had a bad time digging away a thick sand-and-brick reinforcement of all of his floors. We placed it there for safety against descending shells and airplane bombs.

But these existing caves or cellars of the region hardly outdid the great dugouts that the French Army had dug here in its brief stay of three weeks. Division headquarters generally, and other entire organizations, often were hidden away in caves as big and as complicated, one may almost say, as the Catacombs. How they ever did so much digging, Heaven only knows.



But, anyhow, the Frenchman comes naturally by cave digging and cave dwelling: his ancestors were the first European troglodytes. In early days they made homes in the limestone caves of the great banks cut by their rivers in their rapid descent from the Alps to the sea; nor have their descendants to this day given up the cave life. Along some of these river banks one may still see many homes, sometimes an entire village, half house, half cave. The love of good wine has helped to keep up the cave habits, and the good French wine is one result of cave dwelling. In the war, then, the dugout life was for the Frenchman no such straining reversion as it seemed: and he had learned to take to a dugout as naturally as a prairie dog to a hole.

The enemy was soon making us nightly airplane bombing visits. Our supply arrangements, camps, stations, and trains (when these trains were on the whitish chalk roads at night) received his special attention. Our railroad, so necessary for life—how quickly he located it and made it unpopular as a place of visit! His “grass-cutters”—a light bomb for use against men and animals—could be heard crashing far and wide over the sector as our wagons and men moved to the forward positions at night with food, water, munitions, and materials for their comrades in the front lines. We knew afar the rhythmic rise and fall of the whirr of his bombing planes. By day our machine guns and our aircraft (still French!) kept him so high in the heavens that he was rendered harmless; by night he sometimes came so low that one almost felt the whiff of his wings. He was never very danger-

ous, although to the unaccustomed he was, whether high or low, by day or night, terrible. His freedom to soar above you imposed a bitter feeling of helplessness and terror, as if you were right under his hand or heel, completely at his mercy. The reality never justified this feeling.

Airplanes were terrible mainly because they were a new and unfamiliar arm. I well remember the first enemy bombing I ever witnessed—at Nancy. The crack and rattle of machine guns, the boom of anti-aircraft cannon, and the awful roar of descending bombs were terrific, frightful. I thought that the destruction of the city was surely at hand: next day the sun rose upon a wrecked building or two, much shattered glass, and a few dead: the city went its wonted way of business. The next experience was the bombing of our headquarters by an enemy airplane. The entire headquarters force ran excitedly for cover; death seemed imminent. The nearest bomb fell six hundred yards away, missing not only the headquarters but the entire village in which they were situated. Day after day for almost a year the Allied communiqués told of the “successful bombing” of the Metz-Sablons railway station, which to the day of the armistice calmly went on functioning.

Yet, sometimes the bomb hit (the first officer of rank that we lost was so killed), and, hit or miss, I say it was always terrible. Inexperienced soldiers in the trenches and soldiers and civilians in cities and villages visited by the enemy’s planes, far to the rear, became sometimes almost hysterical in the feeling of helplessness and defenselessness that comes over a man at seeing or hear-

ing the enemy circling deliberately above him and earnestly seeking to take his life.

Great numbers of people in these villages slept in the fields, preferring the risk of death from exposure to the risk of being hit by one of these terrible bombs. In consequence of this fear and danger, absolute darkness fell upon camps and villages on both sides of the hostile lines far, far to the rear. Skill in concealing interior lights became phenomenal. Everyone, to the lowest, felt himself responsible, and the private had no hesitation in calling out to his officer in the night, "Lights showing in that house!"

Once in the Mesnil-St. Firmin sector a lone British plane, circling in the daytime over our lines, descended—unmolested, of course—to but a little above the tree-tops, and to our great surprise opened fire upon us. Surprise and doubt ended in our opening fire upon him and driving him away; but, full of grit, he was back in a few minutes, at it again, and after he had killed a couple of horses and wounded a man or two, was again driven off, this time in the direction of a French aviation field. "German," we thought, "shamefully using a British plane to deceive us." An hour later we learned that he had attacked the French too. A French aviator drew near him in the air. Unmolested, the Frenchman shot him down (there was no other choice), to find that the stranger aviator was really English, had become lost, and mistaking friend for foe had unhesitatingly attacked immensely superior numbers. No doubt he felt that he would never have another such opportunity as this to immortalize himself. By a lucky chance he was not killed. The English liaison officer came along in a day or two to express regret.

Toward the end of our stay in the Mesnil-St. Firmin sector, airplanes ceased to be a great terror to us. We had learned. Every new division of the many that afterward passed under my eye had to go through a like learning and experience before they became steady and self-contained about airplanes.

## CHAPTER XXI

### CANTIGNY

MY DIVISION had gone into the Mesnil-St. Firmin sector expecting an enemy offensive. For long none came, but the enemy made up for it by much artillery activity. We did more than respond. The French army and corps commanders were liberal to us with ammunition, and as soon as they saw that our artillery could shoot, they made still larger allowances to us. A passing American writer of lively imagination raised this to something like a million rounds per day. The enemy's guns were well forward, and our fire was soon telling on them. This immensely pleased and surprised our French Allies, who were not only great lovers of artillery, but somehow never expected much of us new troops and were surprised whenever they found that we knew a little about war. Often now we heard that rattle which was so continuous and so stirring upon the blood that there was but one name for it—drum fire. It meant fight. Batteries were extinguished, silenced on both sides; guns dismounted and knocked to pieces; and cannoneers driven to the earth or far away from their batteries. But we had the artillery advantage and were getting the upper hand over the enemy in general. I think it was due to the freshness and zest of our men as against the war-weariness and staleness of the enemy, even though he had been recently victorious. We soon had the enemy pulling his guns



to safer places to the rear. His great guns, superior to our own, never budged, and their crashing in upon our back areas kept us constantly reminded that the enemy still had in mind a great offensive toward the English Channel.

Our patrolling and raiding were steadily improving and were now regularly successful. "The Americans," smilingly said our corps commander, General Vandenburg, "can go and get prisoners whenever I want them for information." We smiled as we thought of the endless counsel, long preparation, the doubt and hesitation of our first raid, only two months before. Colonels were now ordering them on their own initiative and the enemy had to "mind his eye." Our spirits had risen on getting half out of the trench warfare. Of course, we lost men at times, but with experience came skill and comparative safety. Our infantry had learned to follow a rolling barrage with their nose in it.

But the enemy had us on one thing—gas. On this we were short and he long. In one bad night about the village of Villers-Tournelle, he gassed 800 of us. Fortunately, few cases were fatal, but it was a tremendous infliction. I wondered if the enemy ever knew how thoroughly he did his work that night. But our turn with gas did at last come, and we made him also sniff mustard.

Gas is such an intangible thing that men are only with great difficulty made to guard themselves against it. A state of instruction adequate against the danger is extremely hard to obtain: ignorance, indeed, is the hardest thing in the world to struggle against. Our gas officers were almost hysterical in their efforts to teach and impress our new troops; but knowledge and

real, efficient training came only after hard experience and after the hysteria of gas officers had ceased. Of our Villers-Tournelle losses, a gas officer from our G.H.Q. "spoke [Diary] without knowledge or consideration, in that tone of superior criticism that comes from only abstract study, not experience, and laid himself open to attack which I promptly made. He was required by proper authority to abstain from such criticism in future."

Our positions and lines were constantly changing and multiplying. Alternative and spare positions were created to deceive the enemy, and did deceive him. A number of times he gaily bombarded empty American positions. Doubtless he also similarly deceived us, for Mr. German was an adversary indeed: against him no one ever had it all his own way; no ally at any time had a "snap."

The results of this great activity were manifest in our heavy daily casualties. "Our losses [Diary] for the three months that we remained in that sector would average from all causes some sixty men per day." But on account of the greater activity and the electrical state, the stimulus of the war atmosphere, our men kept in humour and bore the heavy losses well. Their humour was grim enough. The arrival of our mustard gas in quantity caused a great jubilee among our artillerymen and a hilarious bombardment of the enemy's position, which doubtless caused many casualties. The 4th of July was likewise made the occasion of a "National Salute" that poured thousands of projectiles upon the enemy—a remembrance of the American day of liberty and independence. Humour lives on in the midst of hardship, wounds, and even death.

The roar of great guns in battle was coming to us steadily from the north these days: the British were having a busy time on the other side of the Somme. But the sound at the time, and the communiqués the next day, were the only things that told us that we were near our British cousins. We saw nothing and thought little of them; we were quite fully occupied with our own affairs. It was a shock to me to find in after months that we had been literally alongside of them in battle and knew it not. The British headquarters were but a few miles from me. So it is in war. A soldier can see and know only that which is immediately before him and that none too well. This is why I am not writing a military history. I recall again my reply to General Pershing when he asked my opinion about some British movement:

“General, I know nothing about it, I never heard of it; I have no time or chance to know of anything but that which is before me.”

Sufficient unto each soldier was the evil of his immediate situation.

We were bettering our situation each month in the Mesnil-St. Firmin sector. My command with all its difficulties and casualties found itself in a better military condition than ever before. It was arranged in line according to our own organization, our American ideas and traditions. Our French commander had learned that we could take care of ourselves, and had ceased to try to nurse and direct us. Many times before on visits, General Pershing had asked: “How are you coming on?” I had never before dared to reply, “All right.” Now I could for the first time confidently answer, “We are doing it right now.” He

looked over everything carefully, agreed with me, and said, "I will send other officers of our forces here to see it."

And now months after the deeds, came our first American decorations for gallantry. In the rush of events and changes even the recipients had almost forgotten. But General Pershing in person conferred these first decorations: that compensated. And then we heard that he had said, "To the 1st Division first"; that consoled us. Yet I could not help remembering the promptness with which the French had rewarded our first acts of gallantry in our earliest service at the front under them. It was done almost simultaneously with the acts. They were ready. Surely the United States was in all ways, even to this, unprepared for war. The action of the French caused me to institute in the division certain means for the recognition, as far as possible, of every gallant or meritorious act. It paid in zealous, daring service.

Our lines in this northwestern region had been chosen in retiring before the Boche in his drive of March. It showed therefore no such inferiority to the enemy's line as that in our sector in eastern France, where the Boche had selected his position in retiring before the French. There he chose, and the French had to take what he left. In our new sector the Allies had had the choice of positions, and now we had the best of the enemy except at some points, one of which was the village of Cantigny. From there he threatened.

"Before we came [Diary] Cantigny had been twice taken and twice lost by the French. Now, to try out the division and to remove this threat, I was allowed to plan an attack upon this village. The plan was



very carefully made in every detail and published to the extent of his part to every man who was to take part in it. All the troops who were to attack were carefully rehearsed in their duties for about a week, and the divisional artillery was largely reinforced by French artillery.

"On May 28th we attacked Cantigny. . . . In this operation parts of the 26th and the 18th Infantry, the 1st Engineers, all of our artillery and much French artillery, some French tanks, and all of the 28th Infantry took part. (The latter regiment made the attack, the others supporting.) We easily captured the village and dug ourselves in. Then began a series of counter attacks from the Germans which lasted about four days, followed by repeated and almost continuous heavy bombardment for two weeks. We had heavy losses; but we stayed.

"This was the first serious fight made by American troops in France, and it was greeted enthusiastically as a wonderful success. I know that it was so carefully prepared that it could not have failed, but it is a fact also that the execution by the troops was very good. The success tremendously increased the Allies' confidence in the American soldiers, and from this date the morale of the Allies steadily rose. The total losses and evacuations of the division, on account of this fight, amounted to some thirteen hundred men."

General Pershing was present at the taking of Cantigny and saw the prisoners coming in. Like me, however, he did not as long as he was with me, seem to be impressed with the wonder of the performance. He seemed to take the capture, as I took it, as a simple affair. But after he had gone evidently something



impressed him. Within a few hours there came back a letter from him impressing upon me in most earnest, emphatic terms his order to hold the position that we had taken, and under no conditions, under no pressure, to quit it. After his quiet, unquestioning assumption while with me, that we were there and would stay there, this letter astonished me beyond measure. I think he must, after leaving me, have encountered some of our Allies and heard them express doubt of our ability to hold what we had won. He meant to show them that we could and would. He was on his mettle.

Anyhow, about this time something must have happened to stir him. Talking of our Allies,

"Do they patronize you?" he asked, looking at me keenly. "Do they assume superior airs with you?"

"No, sir," I answered, "they do not. I have been with them too long and know them too well."

"By——! they have been trying it with me, and I don't intend to stand a bit of it," he said, vehemently. He meant it.

Cantigny, in itself, was a small fight. Hundreds greater had preceded and would follow it in the mighty war. But Cantigny was, nevertheless, one of the important engagements of the war in its import to our war-wearied and sorely tried Allies. To both friend and foe it said, "Americans will both fight and stick." At the time, and for two weeks afterward, I did not realize this. Then the profuse, overjoyed congratulations of our Allies to American commanders spoke the thoughts of their hearts, the comfort, the delight that the American test had brought to them in their discouragement. This, a little later, was followed by the German feeling: the irritated, almost enraged

recognition, disclosed in captured papers, of a new and formidable force against them in the war—the Americans.

The German division that lost Cantigny was bitterly, almost insultingly reproached by its commander during his ineffectual efforts to make it retake the place in some half-a-dozen counter attacks within the next few days. They came and continued to come, these counter attacks—I thought they would never cease—but each time they failed under our steadfast, withering fire. Our men were in Cantigny to stay.

Far, then, beyond the value of the place itself, and far beyond the size of the engagement, Cantigny was of import in its heartening of friend and disheartening of foe. It was a demonstration to the world of what was to be expected of the Americans. It was so accepted by everybody. It took, I repeat, fully two months of felicitations from the Allies and as much observation of their rising spirits to make me realize this.

The 28th Infantry and other troops that took Cantigny were signally honoured with praise and decorations by their own country and by France, under whose corps and army commanders we were at the time serving.

Under the stirring, threatening conditions here prevailing, divisions, corps, and armies were constantly changing, and their commanders frequently assembled for conferences. In this way I met numbers of French officers of high rank. Among them were some of the French generals, notably Fayolle, commanding a great reserve, and Mangin, commanding a corps near me.

General Fayolle I saw but three or four times; twice

he was accompanied by a bishop of the Catholic Church. I wondered if he was, like Marshal Foch, a religious man. Another time I saw him with a map, his plan of a battle. It needed no explanation in words; the map spoke. There was no doubt about what it said. I knew from it that Fayolle was a soldier, a great clear-minded commander.

Of Mangin I was to see more. He had seen a good deal of the world outside of France and he had that characteristic, which I had before noticed in the French Colonial officers, of being a better mixer than the French officer who had always served at home. He impressed you as a stubby man, with a body that seemed somewhat too large for his legs, and ears that literally covered the sides of his flat, short head—a head that somehow gave you the impression of being partly collapsed vertically. The lower jaw was of the firmest: it literally clamped against the upper. No man could carry such a jaw without carrying with it an immense strength and decision.

Mangin was one of the driving, undaunted soldiers that France developed, more like Marshal Foch than any other I knew. His motions were quick and wiry and constantly suggested an English fox terrier: he was a bundle of vigour, nerve, and activity. His manner was very friendly, his words quick, brief, and incisive. He spoke with great clearness: and you knew what he had said. He was a strong man and a fine soldier. I knew it the first time I met him, long before he became a great army commander. His strong quality was this: that no matter how great the difficulties and dangers, his manner and words admitted no possibility that these difficulties and dangers would

not be overcome. He allowed no subordinate for a moment to assume that they could or would not. Although he was markedly a soldier and fighting man, he was not exclusively such. He had seen much and could talk entertainingly on many subjects.

For long Mangin had been separated from the army at the front because of his aggressive fighting characteristics, I was told, which did not permit him to keep out of a fight even when his soldiers were not in morale to make a fight. Here again he was like Foch. Both of them had for some months been held in back areas under the Secretary of War, not under General Pétain, who was commanding the active army in the field. The implication was that both would try to fight when the French could not fight. Now, as the time was approaching when it was known that the Allies would have to fight hard, Mangin, like Foch, was brought back to the fighting line, to command in the region where the French were expecting the next German offensive. I shall see him at Soissons, commanding an army and winning the first victory at the turning of the German tide. I shall start with him to the eastward of Metz, but both of us will be stopped by the armistice.

## CHAPTER XXII

### ON THE WEST LEG OF THE CHÂTEAU- THIERRY SALIENT

IT IS a curious coincidence that at the time the Americans were attacking Cantigny, the Germans were launching across the Chemin des Dames, just north of the Aisne, their third great offensive of 1918. It drove the Château-Thierry salient into the Allied line with terrific losses and fearful effect upon the Allies. It was a complete surprise. A German offensive had been expected: everybody knew that it was due and everybody was guessing where it would fall. Everybody had a theory: there was not probably a mile of front between Switzerland and the North Sea that had not been covered by somebody's guess and perhaps suggested also to Marshal Foch. But if anybody suggested the Chemin des Dames, it was apparently a guess not sufficiently supported by information to be convincing to the authorities; for certainly the offensive, falling where it did, was a surprise to the Allied command. It is true that it hit first some weak British divisions that had suffered greatly in the German offensive of March; but the French were also at once and so much more largely involved than the British that we may as well say that the offensive fell upon the French. In March it had been the British who had been unable to withstand the German onslaught. The French had then been somewhat critical of their Allies for



failure. Now it was the Frenchman's turn, and they stood it no better than the British. They too were swept aside, captured, wiped out in the same whirlwind way right down as far as the Marne. Their losses were stunning; I don't remember that we ever learned the exact figures. It was an hour of consternation for the Allies. The sweep of the Germans seemed irresistible. Germany, supposedly worn out and exhausted, was again making the Allied world hold its breath. She had France almost by the throat. The outline on the map at my headquarters of the salient which she had just driven, one day so painfully, so strikingly resembled the head of a bulldog, looking straight upon Paris, that I copied it off to keep.

Again it looked as though the French Government must leave Paris. We were told that essential war industries would be safely moved away from the city where the great bulk of war production was going on. Much assurance went forth that the French Government was taking timely steps to save the country and continue the war, even should Paris fall. But assurances could not assure. The war industries, everybody knew, could not be saved in such a hurry. Everybody knew, too, that even if the industries could be saved the railroads of France could not be. They all led to Paris: you cannot go anywhere in France without going there first. If Paris fell, the railroads fell, and France could not continue the war without her railroads. The situation was more threatening than after the first drive of March. The Allies, lately so cheered by the arrivals of American troops in great numbers, were again thrown into the dumps.

As in the great drive in March, the German now again

ran himself out of breath, so to speak, and was brought to a halt on the Marne. He stopped to retake breath, to bring his communications up to the position gained, and to gather himself for a new blow. This was an anxious time for the Allies. While waiting, the enemy took an inward crook out of the western leg of his salient, further increasing the Allies' anxiety: he seemed to be able to do as he liked. His line was bulging threateningly at another point on the western leg. A French army was assembled to force it in. No success. The weak French divisions were further shattered, with no results except discouragement. The French no longer had *élan*; their soldiers looked upon counter attacks as leading only to death. Some of their division commanders regarded any attack in much the same way. I saw one of their shattered divisions upon its return to position next to me; I remember the downheartedness of the hour.

Just after this third great German offensive of 1918 (as I now remember), General Pershing came on a visit to my command. He had just returned from London and was in high spirits. He told me: "We are now going to have American troops transported to France at an astonishing rate, one hundred thousand or more per month."

This is how it came about: While he was in London British War Office officials had urged him to induce our government to furnish American recruits to the British divisions instead of sending over organized American divisions, offering to bring over these recruits in British ships. General Pershing refused point-blank, saying that even if he were willing to recommend it (which he was not) the American people would not stand for it, would

throw down any government that would do such a thing as recruit any foreign army for this war. "But," said General Pershing, "if you have ships to bring over recruits to your armies you have them to bring American divisions to the American Army. Send us those ships and we will bring to France organized American divisions. We have them, more than the ships can bring." [To all previous requests for ships, the British had answered that they hadn't them to spare.]

General Pershing's reply was reported to Lloyd George, who, at once recognizing that American national pride could not accept the British proposition, himself accepted General Pershing's. The Prime Minister said he would furnish enough ships to transport more than one hundred thousand troops per month. Having in mind the answer of the British to previous requests for ships, General Pershing showed surprise and doubt as to their ability to send ships enough to bring over this great number of troops. Mr. Lloyd George answered that his ship transportation officer, who had never failed him in any assurance, had assured him that they could do it; he himself was confident.

In telling me this General Pershing showed great satisfaction, almost elation. Indeed, he had cause, for here, in sea transport, lay the crux of the war, not only for Americans, but for all the Allies. The British knew it; that is why Mr. Lloyd George found that the ships could be spared.

And we would soon be receiving a hundred thousand troops a month! Wonderful! But could the Allies, I asked myself, hold out long enough for them to be put in action? Would not Germany be able to make another great push and break through to Paris before

we could bring over enough men to prevent her? "Fighting with their backs to the wall," the British, assisted by the French, had barely been able to hold Germany after her great drive in March. By hard efforts, Americans and French had brought her to a stop on the Marne. Maybe, all together, we could hold her. The enemy could not long afford to allow himself to be held in the Château-Thierry salient: the sides would some day scissor together upon him disastrously. As soon, therefore, as he had brought up his communications and ammunition and reassembled his divisions, he went at it hard again.

The Emperor was brought to lend his presence and encouragement to his fighting troops.

The effort was to be wide. It reached my division still before Mondidier, beyond the western side of the Château-Thierry salient. We were expecting it. The French corps commander's orders said in effect, "Fight in the first line to the death," and then, strange to say, allowed a retirement from the first line to the second line! My division staff had drawn my fighting order upon the first part, ignoring or overlooking the second. This second part was brought to my personal notice only when the commander of the French division on our right proposed to arrange a concerted retirement of our touching first lines. There was no doing both the things that the French corps order said. They were in irreconcilable conflict and could not together be understood by our men. The order that I gave was, in substance, to fight in the first line to the death, and if that line were lost, the second-line troops were to counter attack.

I went with my artillery commander and the French liaison officer, and in person told our French corps



commander of the order which I had given, that we would fight to the last in the first line, could not retire therefrom. After the stern order to fight to the last in the first line we could not understand, I said, how this retirement could be made; but if the first line were lost we were going to counter attack from the second; that my order had already gone forth, and the fight being on the order could not be changed. Just then the French army commander came in. He and the corps commander talked awhile about the matter, but made no change in the latter's orders. There was then nothing to be gained by changing. They left the matter as it stood.

I returned to my command and made no change in my order. When the fighting was over, the French division next on my right had been driven back from its first line one or more kilometers; the enemy's attack had reached but had not taken my front line; we had counter attacked and driven him back to his starting point. His attack did not extend beyond my left.

This incident seemed commonplace enough at the time and soon disappeared from my mind. I remember speaking of it to only one person, General Pershing, to whom I showed the copy, in French, of our corps commander's order. But the incident, or some other like it, was afterward made the subject of much public enthusiasm in the United States, and at last one day, during the battle of the Meuse-Argonne, a newspaper clipping from an American paper was shown me in which the whole thing was made much of, and ex-President Taft had declared that it had occurred with me.

"But it did not, did it, General?" questioned my



chief-of-staff, General Bjornstad. "It occurred with General Bundy, of the 2nd Division."

Under the frills with which it was reported in the newspaper clipping I did not recognize the incident which I have just related. So I said, jokingly, "Well, General Bjornstad, an ex-president of the United States said I did and I am not going to take issue with him."

"Why, yes, you did do it," asserted Colonel G. K. Wilson, an assistant chief-of-staff, "do you not remember?"—and he recalled in detail the incident I have related—"That's what it is."

The matter dropped. We were all busy.

Cantigny and the Boche drive to the Marne had been practically simultaneous. Not long after, the rumour reached me that my division was to be relieved in its sector before Montdidier by the 2nd (American) Division, and we were to be sent to the Marne to face the Germans there. I was glad: It was the place of danger and so the place of honour: we felt very proud. But while, as we afterward learned, plans had actually been thus formed, the energy of the Boche prevented them from ever being executed. He had suddenly become so active and threatening in the bulldog nose (the point of the Château-Thierry salient) that the 2nd Division on its way to relieve us had to be deflected to Château-Thierry for immediate help to the French there. In their fight which followed at Belleau Wood this division did invaluable work in helping to stop the Boche in his push toward Paris.

In the 2nd Division, constituting about one third of it, was a brigade of Marines. To prevent valuable information from reaching the enemy, our censorship regulations prohibited press reports from mentioning

organizations. To say "Marines" did not violate this regulation: It mentioned no organization. So the press reports of the 2nd Division's fight shouted, "Marines," "Marines," "Marines," until the word resounded over the whole earth and made the inhabitants thereof, except a few Americans in the army in France, believe that there was nothing in the 2nd Division, and, indeed, nothing in front of the Germans, but Marines. The American war correspondents were certainly preëmpted for the Marines. While their reports were resounding at the highest and American readers were acclaiming the Marines as the saviours of Paris and the war, General Pershing came on a visit to me.

"General," I said to him at dinner, "I see that the 2nd Marines," (emphasizing the 2nd as though that division was all Marines) "have won the war at Belleau Wood."

"Yes," he answered dryly, "and I stopped it yesterday as I passed there."

But had he? He stopped only what was yet to come, not what had already gone forth. That he could not stop, and it was, I say, enough to convince all good enthusiastic Americans that at Belleau Wood there was nothing but Marines and, of course, dead Germans, their victims and theirs alone. I thought of Peter Dunn's "Alone in Cuba."

The non-relief of my command (in consequence of the deflection of the 2nd Division) involved but a temporary delay. A little war-worn, exhausted French division soon came in its place. The French commander and his officers were bravely trying to make up for their division's pitiful weakness in numbers by unending personal activity and omnipresence. Never saw I greater effort by more sacrificing, patriotic men. By

July 10th my 1st Division was out of the line and moving—where? The orders designated the general region between Paris and the Château-Thierry salient. After more than a month the nose of the bulldog head of this salient was still there and pointing toward Paris, more threatening than ever. The nose, it is true, had been snubbed a little at Belleau Wood and Château-Thierry; but now, to the east, the lower jaw projected itself across the Marne southward in a new bite. McAlexander and his regiment of the American 3rd Division had immortalized themselves, preventing this jaw from closing upon the nose at Château-Thierry. But a part of the bulldog head was still held on the south bank of the Marne.

And now the 1st Division was to become my “old” command. Some two weeks before General Pershing on a passing visit (he was always visiting and seeing) had said, “I am forming other corps.” (We had thus far had two and these were embryonic.) “You shall have one. It shall be yours and known as Bullard’s Corps.” (It was never so known.) Things were growing in the A. E. F.—it was time. On joining the 1st Division six months before, my wildest hope was that I might be able to retain command six months in the war. I expected by that time to be made the victim either of my own errors or my country’s demand for results before results could be expected. I remembered now my thoughts of that time and thanked my luck and a President who had allowed no commander in this war to be sacrificed for the faults of bad military system fixed upon the country.

After the sacrifices and hardships that the division and I had borne together, our parting should have been

sad. But under the threat and the menace of the hour, in the dangers of the situation, there was no time for long, sad partings. The order had come. "Good-bye, good luck—don't get killed!" and we all hurried off to the trying duties constantly rising before us.

But I knew that I had left the 1st Division in good hands—General Summerall's. Long years ago, as I have already said, in the Philippines, in camp and in battle, he had won my respect and admiration. In the past six months, commanding the artillery of the 1st Division, he had for ever established himself in the hearts of all. I had urged General Pershing to name him as my successor. To no other could I have given up the command with equal sense that all would be well with them, with greater sureness that the division would be led to success and honour. As I sped away from the division, I said in my thoughts, "Good-bye, Summerall! With you I have led first a regiment—long ago—and now a division, to their first successes in war. I wish I could carry you with me always, but you have grown too big to be carried by me any longer. And you, Buck, King, Marshall, Parker, and the others, loyal helpers and comrades, I am preceding you upward just a little—no more. Sure am I that no division ever will give to its country's service more zealous, more loyal, or abler men. And you, soldiers, you are wonderful: every act of yours increases the renown of your division. You will put it among the immortals." They fulfilled all my prophetic thoughts. On July 14th I gave up command of the 1st Division and set off to my new corps.



## CHAPTER XXIII

### SOISSONS

NOW again, during the first half of July, the enemy seemed determined to break out of his Château-Thierry salient to Paris. All of the available American forces, as well as French, were being hurried into the narrow region between Paris and Château-Thierry. It was a time and place of change, hurry, uncertainty, almost confusion. Commands were moving, going, coming everywhere. I was to have the American IVth Corps, to consist of the 1st and 2nd Divisions and others gathering in this region. In the kaleidoscopic changes of orders and plans, the IVth Corps never materialized. Some of its divisions were turned aside to meet the Germans now on the south bank of the Marne threatening the weak French Sixth Army between it and Paris.

I reported to General Degoutte, commanding the Sixth Army. He received me in the winning French way, and spoke in great admiration of the American colonel, McAlexander, and his regiment (the 38th U. S. Infantry, "The Rock of the Marne"). This regiment had just repulsed with great determination a German attack which had succeeded in passing the Marne and in pushing back all other troops of the French Army to the right of the 38th along a front of eleven kilometres. Expressing confidence in his ability to beat back the enemy that had just accomplished the



feat of crossing a difficult river in his presence, General Degoutte pointed out to me the position of his army. I was shocked. I didn't see how it could be in a worse position. General Degoutte, I thought, not only did not have a ghost of a show to drive the enemy back across the Marne, but was himself in danger of defeat and scattering by the enemy. The recent German attack had put General Degoutte's army where it was.

As things stood, with a salient crook on the Marne's south bank at the point where Colonel McAlexander had stood, I thought the Germans "had it dead." Something outside itself must save that army if it was to be saved. I saw nothing but ruin for it if left to itself. More, if it were beaten, Paris was lost and the war was lost. Something, I thought, had to be done and done quickly. Feeling very blue indeed I left the general to await the arrival of my IVth Corps Headquarters. I was not glad to go into the Sixth Army.

That night, I think it was, the American IIIrd Corps Headquarters, recently organized, arrived in the region. I was ordered to take it without delay, and with the 1st and 2nd divisions report to the French Tenth Army then assembling at night in secrecy in the great forest of Villers-Cotterets, to the north, in order to attack at once on the western side of the Château-Thierry salient toward Soissons. This was the "something" to save the Sixth Army and Paris. Any one could see that it was the right thing. A great successful blow here would not only stop the enemy, it would defeat and ruin him; it would mean the beginning of his end. From the depths of the day before, my spirits now soared. It was fine. I have heard Marshal Foch's

strategy often spoken of in terms of wonder. Looking at the railroad, the country, and the enemy's line, his strategy was not intricate or hard to understand.

The artillery of the 1st Division, for some days held in our last sector for safety of the little French relieving division, had only now rejoined in bare time to be turned about in the IIIrd Corps in its hurried, secret night march to the Forêt de Villers-Cotterets. The infantry of the 1st Division had had some days of rest; not so the artillery. It was tired. But this was mid-July and the men had no such bitter cold to face; nor were the horses now as starved as in their mid-January trip in ice and snow up to their first sector in far Lorraine. The horses by steady care had even ceased to be of the "raw-boned breed" that General Summerall and I, three months ago, had so vehemently praised to General Micheler. They were now of a rounded-out, fat, chubby breed that could better stand work. The division, too, had ample transportation and had learned to use it. Altogether, it was in good condition for hard work, set out promptly on its journey, and arrived in good order on time.

The other division of the IIIrd Corps, the 2nd, after hard service in line facing the enemy near Château-Thierry, found itself weary, with less transportation, and less able to move with ease. Also, its orders for the movement by French motor trucks seemed in the great hurry of the time, to have been delayed or never perhaps to have been formally given or communicated. That was conceivable. The enemy was threatening and might attack; it was to his advantage to attack, at any, the earliest, moment. The French and the Americans were in a very narrow region, literally buzzing, swarming

in the press of time and space to accomplish the necessary movements and concentrations to meet a vigorous, aggressive enemy who now saw victory almost in his grasp. Few orders came to my command in those ten days, July 4th–14th, in formal and regular manner. If it bore any semblance of authority we obeyed any order that meant action, and that is what the 2nd Division now did. It moved toward battle in a French motor train on the mere order, as I recall, of a French motor transport captain. It growled a little through its chief-of-staff, the only Preston Brown, at the manner of receipt of the order; but on it went, its last units arriving barely in time but arriving nevertheless, to join, July 18th, in the Battle of Soissons that started the Boche downward to complete defeat.

Very cloudy, foggy weather helped to hide the march of the IIIrd Corps, which moved mostly by night, through forests and hidden roads to join the French Tenth Army in the Forêt de Villers-Cotterets. There we found General Mangin, my neighbour of a month ago near Montdidier, the French colonial, the Fox Terrier with the clamped jaw. I thought we could not have found a better commander for the occasion.

The attack was set for the early morning of July 18th. By the utmost effort the 1st and 2nd divisions and my IIIrd Corps Headquarters could just get in place in time for the attack. Time was utterly lacking for me to put my staff in operation, to study the plan of attack, issue and communicate orders—in other words, for the corps to function as a corps. It had never yet so functioned.

The corps headquarters was the newest thing I ever saw—except what the stork brings. Delay was not

to be thought of. I had just seen the enemy's fearful menace at the nose of the salient. We were now going to attack to relieve that menace. This had to be done quickly or it could not be done at all. Every hour of delay meant increasing chances of discovery by the enemy, who, apparently, thus far suspected nothing. I therefore at once decided (as it had been left to my decision by the American Commander-in-Chief) that my two divisions should go into the battle as divisions in a French corps already on the ground, with its orders and plans all ready. This was done.

The two divisions were placed in General Berdoulat's corps, the 1st on the left and the 2nd on the right, with the Moroccan division between them. Just seven months ago to-day the 1st had relieved the Moroccans in front of the enemy in distant Lorraine. They were veterans, warriors of all the races of the earth—Negroes, Arabians, Moroccans, Canadians, Spaniards, Americans, Chinese, Senegalese—everything in the shape of men, remnants of the *Légion Étrangère* and other organizations that had slowly vanished in four years of war. But warriors and veterans as they might be, they were to-day, to their manifest joy, to find themselves standing between young soldiers of America, who were never to lag behind them, nay, who were often to lead them on the bloody field of battle which lay before us.

The attacking Allied forces stretched away southward to near the Ourcq, northward to near the Aisne. I am concerned only with the centre, which, as it proved, was to make the principal and deepest drive. Reaching north from the *Forêt de Villers-Cotterets* it faced eastward toward the railroad and the highway running



north and south from Soissons to Château-Thierry.

Apparently unsuspected, certainly unmolested by the enemy, my two divisions marched and moved all night of July 17th-18th, in order to get into positions for the attack in the early morning. How the 2nd Division troops ever reached their proper places in that black forest, Heaven only knows; but they did. The division commander, James G. Harbord, until late at night was drawing up his orders at my own headquarters at the little village of Taille-Fontaine, as his division was arriving. His own headquarters were yet to be established somewhere in the deep forest. "You may never find the spot," I said, "and if you do, it is likely to be only a spot, not a headquarters. Stop here and give your orders." He did.

General Summerall had the 1st Division; we know him.

Commanding the 2nd Division came General J. G. Harbord. It was far, far back, in 1903, in far Jolo of the Philippines in the four to six feet tall Cogon grass, on one of General Wood's expeditions, that I had first noted him. I was driving (for effect I might say—leading) my infantry battalion up a steep hill against hostile Moros in the tall grass and among the great boulders on the slopes. It was difficult driving; it could be done well only from horseback, which, on account of its visibility, put the horseman in much danger. I found my long line everywhere going up well: a horseman who did not belong to the command at all, who had joined it on the spot of his own volition, for the fun, perhaps, for the fight, to feel the thrill, was helping me—Harbord.

Here now in France, for the battle before Soissons,



came the man again, this time having begged off from chief-of-staff to General Pershing, to come and get into the fight again—Harbord.

The 1st Division, arriving earlier and taking position more in the open, north of the forest, had less difficulty. The Moroccan division was already in place when we arrived.

The French Tenth Army was strong in artillery. The French seemed always so: they supplied the corps artillery the Americans lacked, and made up for some of the machine guns of the 2nd Division which had not arrived.

H-hour came. There was no artillery preparation: it would have announced our intention. The troops followed on the heels of their own rolling barrage. Not for long, and then only in spots, was there artillery response from the enemy. He was completely surprised, and we walked over his lines.

For a few minutes, I heard, almost at H-hour, his artillery let down its fire upon the 1st Division's first line about to "jump off": then stopped, why our men did not know. Perhaps he thought he'd only "seen things" and so stopped. But artillery fire is not what kills men: it is the machine guns, and these were in operation.

I was well forward behind the lines and about opposite the centre. I could, of course, see, and could hear well, the progress of the battle. It was one-sided during practically the whole first day. Even early in the morning it was perfectly evident that we would break through the enemy's line. During the whole forenoon and day our advance seemed steady, almost unbroken. Our reserve moved past me regularly and

calmly. There were no signs, I heard nothing to indicate that the enemy was reacting at all upon these reserves with his artillery. They moved forward in columns, unmolested on the open road—a plain sign that our own front lines were giving the enemy more than he could attend to.

I was struck with the ease with which it was possible to decide which way the fight was going. Sometime in the forenoon, long after it was perfectly clear by all signs, sounds, and movements of our own troops that we had broken and gone over the enemy's lines, I received a message from our army commander, that he was thinking of sending in his cavalry! I groaned. It was too late; they should have started two hours before. If they went right now, I felt that they could never overtake the fight fast enough to find the enemy still in confusion from his first defeat, and be able to have any effect. They would find him rallied or with his reserves formed to meet them; or if not this, they would find that our own infantry were masters of the situation and cavalry could do nothing, would not be needed.

Two hours later, perhaps, the cavalry began to go past me. They marched along at the same rate, and mixed in columns with the men on foot. It was a sad sight to see cavalry thus going up to follow an advantage gained. I felt perfectly sure that they would do no good, and they did none. "The cavalry [my diary notes] passed the infantry line in places, and in places only." I was sorely disappointed at this use of the cavalry, yet I felt and still feel that it was not to be criticized. I was farther to the front and perhaps in a better position, under less strain of responsibility,

and so better able to judge of the course of the action than the army commander. This, too, was the first turning of the tide of German victory, the tide that had lasted so long that almost everybody had despaired of its ever turning. Could the French commander be sure that it was turning? He must have seen that he was winning. Would it have been right to presume too much upon success? A like break and a like attempted use of cavalry by the British Army under General Byng had last year resulted in bad reverses and a prompt loss of all gains. Again, with a large part of his army made up of American troops of pushing and staying qualities to him unknown, it was natural for the French army commander not to be too daring. And, anyhow, like a snail touched when half out of his shell, the enemy must now shrink inward from his salient for shelter and safety.

I could, I say, see how our army commander might have reasoned thus, and acted as he did, slowly and cautiously. I myself would never have so reasoned and so acted. I would have risked all upon a dash by every cavalryman in my command. I longed for one single American cavalry division, led by an American cavalryman that I knew: he would have gone through or lost all. If on the first day we could have broken through to the great highway and railroad leading south through Soissons into the Château-Thierry salient, I see no reason why the capture of Germans in the Battle of Soissons should not have turned out two hundred thousand instead of the actual twenty thousand.

But regrets were useless; they are always useless.

We won the battle; it was safely ours. That was evident almost from the first, certainly by the night

of July 18th. All that followed—and there were three and one half days more of it—was but in confirmation, with some gain of ground but little addition to the fact until the Tenth Army was brought to a standstill on the fourth day.

The 2nd Division had entered the battle in a great hurry and under great difficulties, moving up at night through the heavy black Forêt de Villers-Cotterets. It had slept little or none for two nights. Its line of attack was much in the forest. In two days it was so reduced by fatigue, loss, and scattering, owing to the great difficulties of the ground and forest through which it moved, that it was relieved and withdrawn from the battle. The 1st Division having arrived hours before the battle opened, and attacking over comparatively open ground, was able to remain in the battle three days longer, in all five days, twice as long as any other division that took part in the attack. And when it was relieved and withdrawn (Now, critics, let me alone; this had been my division) it withdrew in marvellous, nothing less than marvellous order, marching by organizations to designated spots for hot prepared meals! After five days' fighting! It was staff organization that caused such functioning of strained and broken parts, staff organization that, in consequence of my study at our G. H. Q. in France, had been carried further in this division than perhaps in any other ever raised by the United States.

One regiment, my own old 26th Infantry, had lost every field officer, six, and its colonel had been killed. It came out of the battle, after five days, in fine order, commanded by a man of less than two years of total service! Can you beat that?



Soissons is counted one of the great battles of the war. This regiment, for two years immediately before the war, had been stationed on the Mexican border, scattered in small detachments of from two men to two companies, over a lonely dangerous region one hundred miles long by fifty miles wide. Never had soldiers a better chance or greater need to learn self-reliance and they did learn it. Every man, however lowly his grade, had his function and practised it, learned to take care of himself and of others too. My orderly, a care-free, happy-go-lucky private, from this trial on the Mexican border, became in the war a First Sergeant of a company of two hundred and fifty men, and there were others like him. The regiment took to the war some six hundred of these men. Its old officers quickly disappeared by promotions early in the war; its enlisted men stayed. These, with their training and traditions of self-reliance, made the war regiment, the 26th Infantry of Soissons and Sedan.

Soissons was a victory, not sweeping or overwhelming, not in itself more than barely a victory, still a victory that meant the final drawing in of the Château-Thierry salient, which had existed for more than a month as a terror to the Allies, a threat that they had barely been able to meet. Since the war someone has tried to create the idea that Marshal Foch, in his far-seeing, superior strategy had allowed, nay, even had invited the Germans to punch this salient in his lines. This, like many other wonders attributed to the great, seems to me to come as a back-sight. There was nothing that reached me in the rumours or talk or orders of the time that indicated any such thing. If Marshal Foch did design it and invite the Germans again to the



Marne, he must have been considerably worried by the great losses and the terrible commotion, almost confusion, that their coming and arrival there created in his forces and among the Allies. Had his following victory at Soissons been more brilliant, more clear and more complete, this fable would have been more credible. As it is, it is incredible.

My corps headquarters were being practised in their functioning, the first trial showing a lamentable failure in the first essential, namely, to live. "When the time came [Diary] for my first meal, there was no knife, fork, plate, spoon, or even a cook. There was some bread, meat and coffee, and an awkward inexperienced man, who tried to heat them up, in which operation he mixed in with them the greatest number of flies that I think I ever saw anywhere. I, however, quickly had that changed, because my French aide, Lieutenant Secheresse, had been in civil life a restaurateur. In a few days we were living again." In the next two months, I put much thought, time, and effort upon the organization of my II<sup>rd</sup> Corps headquarters. But war, movement, and the growing scarcity of trained officers in our ever-increasing army never allowed me quite to make it what I would have had it.

"On the 23<sup>rd</sup> or 24<sup>th</sup> of July [Diary] the III<sup>rd</sup> Corps began to be withdrawn from the line at Soissons, and returned to position to the southwest of Villers-Cotterets. There, other divisions were added to it and much organization took place. The rest of a week or ten days here enabled me to run down to Paris for a night and have myself examined physically by quite a number of surgeons and doctors, which did me no good. I had simply been suffering from neuritis, a bad

stomach, hard work, and many flies. . . . The IIIrd Corps Headquarters, in this period, was stationed at a large château near the village of Morte Fontaine. It was a perfectly magnificent place in which to live, in the centre of a fine park."

## CHAPTER XXIV

### ACROSS THE SALIENT

THE IIIrd Corps, still consisting of the 1st and 2d Divisions, remained in rest near Morte Fontaine some two weeks. The word "rest" must here be taken in the special sense that it had acquired only in this war. It means a surcease from that close, straining contact and matching of wits and strength with the enemy that go with merely being in the trenches or in the front lines: it was not rest from other labours—drill, instruction, refitting discipline, reëquipment. It was, on the contrary only a prelude to these beginning again after a few days in preparation for a new start.

After this "rest" the Corps was ordered to move to Charline on the Marne. We moved at once and took up our headquarters in the village of Mont St. Père on the north bank of the Marne a few rods from a French-American pontoon bridge over the river. I say a few rods: whan I first looked at it, the distance seemed very much greater: it shrank to a "few rods" when the enemy's airplanes that night and every night for a week dropped bombs to try to put that important bridge out of commission. This is not the only instance that I noted in this war where, when it was a question of how far away from one projectiles were falling, very great distances seemed to shrink to nothing. Near this bridge were grouped three French villages, Mezy, Charline, and Mont St. Père. They had been bombed,

charred, shattered to ruins, and were now being reduced to mere hummocks by further nightly bombing by the enemy's planes from beyond the Vesle. Out of the Château-Thierry salient the enemy was going, but he was going stubbornly—turning ever and anon like a wounded lion upon his assailant.

Like most of the rivers in France, the Marne has high bluffs and a broader bed which it had used as a greater river in bygone ages. These bluffs at Mont St. Père were filled with caves, one of which was conveniently near to my headquarters. When the enemy's reverberating bombing began, I thought I would go live in the cave, but before I could begin, I was relieved by a happy incident. A passing enemy plane dropped the biggest and the loudest bomb that I ever heard explode. It fell in the village of Mont St. Père, again "a few rods" from where I was. I almost said to myself, like other cowards that I have known, that I was the only one of the whole headquarters that was not killed. Then I went to look, found that the bomb had exploded close beside the headquarters offices and not a soul had been hurt! I did not think it worth while to go into the cave. This was the front of the French Sixth Army (General Degoutte), whose precarious position had three weeks before made me fear for the whole Allied cause. Thanks partly to its own staying qualities but more to the punch in the enemy's sides by the French Tenth Army and the American IIIrd Corps at the Battle of Soissons, that position was now changed. The French Sixth Army and American Ist Corps together had now gone to the Vesle, driving and following the wounded lion.

In this Sixth Army, after a few days, I was to take

the command of a mixed corps of French and American divisions. One American division, the 3d, that had for some time been in this French army and corps, was now retiring for rest. I found its commander, chief-of-staff and others quite critical and fault-finding of the French command under which they had been serving. From this region and, I think from the same French army as well as from another, the American 2d Division had lately come to my IIIrd Corps equally critical of the French command.

In both cases French commanders had fully reciprocated, severely criticizing especially the chiefs-of-staff of these American divisions, but somewhat passing over the division commanders. My own experience with the French had been so contrary to this, that I thought fit to caution the commanders of both American divisions to be more careful with the French. But before I could establish a better understanding between French and Americans the existing irritation between them had started a question that contributed in the end to the loss of his brigade by an American brigadier. Just relieved from the front lines for rest, this brigade was ordered back to reinforce a weak French corps. In returning under trying conditions of fatigue, darkness, and ill-known roads, its orders were changed by the French commander, causing (for no good reason, said the general and his officers) further fatigue and confusion. It was this very thing—this changing of orders—which the 3d Division had been criticizing in the French command. The brigade apparently became stubborn and the orders were but ill, or not at all, executed. It was almost a repetition of Fitz-John Porter's action at the second Bull Run. Preceding



and succeeding this were other failures of the same brigade to meet higher commanders' expectations as to promptness, vigour, and energy, against the enemy. Altogether these things resulted shortly in the general's losing his brigade. Complete sacrifice of his own will, death in his effort to obey, even death that seemingly counts for nothing, is required at the hands of the soldier in war. It is his to play to his best, to his utmost, the given part; but to choose what that part shall be belongs to his superior.

And now I was myself to have a little straining experience with a French general. Up to this moment, in a year of service and work with the French, I had had only the smoothest, most agreeable and helpful associations and service with them. It had been nothing else than fine comradeship. It had made my command, and especially me, Francophile. Now, I say, I was to have a little jar, a slight one—but still a jar:

When about to relieve the French corps I suggested to its commander the changing of an optional expression in an order to an imperative one. The order was being issued to American as well as to French troops. The French general, a bit pompous and proud of himself, got mad, and his chief-of-staff glared at me, the general snarling, "I have been at this thing long enough to know, and I don't want suggestions." Explanations he was unwilling for a while to accept, but, mentally excusing him on account of the irritated state of feeling here existing between French and Americans, I was patient and smoothed him over. In a few days my corps completely relieved the French corps and I bade good-bye to the general and his chief-of-staff, all in good humour. A French division remained in my corps.

The Château-Thierry salient was slowly being crushed in, the enemy pivoting on Rheims and swinging his right flank backward through Soissons. His swing backward had become very slow indeed by the time he had reached the Vesle—on the front of the French Sixth Army. He was contesting every foot of ground, every point of contact. At the same time, changing orders from higher command made it rather difficult for me to know exactly what to do or how to do it.

The Commander of the Sixth Army, General Degoutte had a reputation as a fighter ever since the days of Verdun, and he was demonstrating great impatience at not being allowed to push the enemy hard. Rumours were reaching us that the French had too many armies, that they must be consolidated, increased in size and reduced in number—and that General Degoutte's was one of those to go. The Sixth Army was actually ordered to be relieved, and I reported to the French army next on its right, toward Rheims. The relief was not accomplished, however, before the order was revoked. The changing of orders caused much uncertainty. In the meantime the enemy, with long-range guns, was pounding away at every village, road, and piece of wood upon my front. At two or three points Degoutte's troops (American troops) had crossed the Vesle a few yards, not more.

The General was determined to hold these little crossings as bridgeheads, notably the one at the village of Fismes. In doing so the fighting was made practically continuous, with heavy, steady losses on our side. Of course the losses were not one-sided, but what losses we were inflicting upon the enemy were unknown and it seemed to our new American troops that the whole

thing was one-sided, that they were sustaining all the losses. This view was of course due to inexperience. Most of the troops now composing my corps had been in contact with the enemy only a very short time, and one of the divisions (the 77th) was now for the first time really entering battle. This feeling caused considerable depression for a short time.

The cover for our troops was also well known to the enemy who had just retreated over the ground that we were now occupying. In his position north of the Vesle, he had been able to maintain himself with little labour, because these were positions that had long been occupied, having been very carefully prepared by the French against a German push from the direction of Chemin-des-Dames. The bluffs were honeycombed with caves; sometimes in a single one a hundred men could live in shelter and comfort. From these caves the enemy sallied forth at every little effort of ours to cross the river, and turned his deadly machine guns upon us at short range. It was all the easier for him, because the whole stream was under observation from his caves. He was able thus to reach with his long-range guns our troops in nearly all of their positions. I was surprised, after all, at the ineffectiveness of this long-range fire. In many places I saw that our troops in the second position were thickly crowded under every hill and in almost every valley: men, horses, wagons, supplies, and artillery, in enormous masses. For the first few days of this condition I was greatly worried and spent much of my time driving officers to scatter these troops. Then I saw that these masses were not being destroyed, and that they were not suffering, and I let them alone. The enemy was having all he could

do to take care of himself against our first line; he had little attention to spare for our second.

Behind the American 1st Corps and other American divisions I now saw appearing for the first time large numbers of American labour troops, working especially upon the roads, which had been badly damaged by the fire of ourselves and the enemy. It was funny, but wherever we saw road work we knew whether it was done by Americans. If crude, they had done it, not the French: the latter always did it beautifully. But there was one thing in which we beat the French: when we did it, though not fine, it was good enough and done in time to serve the advancing troops. This was truly American. The French many times to me expressed their envy of this trait of ours. But they were never quite willing to give up perfection for good-enough.

The aggressive General Degoutte did not long leave our headquarters at Mont St. Père, on the Marne. I moved forward close up to the village of Coulange. Here the conditions were indescribably bad, the worst that I encountered anywhere in all France at any time. All of this region, including this village, had for years been occupied by the reserve troops of the French line facing the enemy in the dangerous position of the Chemin-des-Dames. At the end of May in this year the French and the English had been driven over this ground in the Château-Thierry drive. Then backward, out of this salient, the Germans had been driven in turn by Americans and French. All these passing and occupying troops had left things indescribably filthy, indeed had left nothing that would contribute to anything but the discomfort and danger of the present occupiers. I have said that the enemy's



long-range fire was dangerous. It was; but the filth and the myriads of flies were much more dangerous. In the midst of fighting and pushing onward there was no such thing as saving one's self from either filth or flies, and everybody was more or less ill. I think that had it been in our own country such conditions would have created a catastrophe. Here, however, it was not so, for what reason, I have never been able to tell; perhaps because of a determination upon the part of our officers and men not to give way to any sickness, but to fight it out.

After some two weeks of this terrible life of filth and flies, during which time I was continuously ill, I had to go and take a physical examination to ascertain my fitness to remain on duty in France. I was so ill and reduced that I was consoling myself with the thought that, at any rate, I had not failed in the war; that, if I could not on account of physical condition, continue in the field I had demonstrated that I had nevertheless carried forward my command to next to the highest that could be given. I was physically so run down that if the doctors had said "Quit," I could not have murmured. When I took my examination I was breathless. I expected one verdict—"Unfit." The doctors finished.

On their saying nothing I asked, "How about it?"

"Oh, you are good for ten years more." I was alive again. It really so much increased my nerve that from that minute I began to gain. I had really been scared half into disability by the fear that I should be found deficient physically.

Under the fire of a queer old long-range, low-velocity German gun that kept dropping its great shells in our vicinity, I had soon to move the corps headquar-



ters out of Coulange to about a mile off to one side of the main road. There the work of the corps went on quietly, as we listened to the dropping of the big shells in the practically vacant village of Coulange. This old gun of the enemy's sent the noise of its discharge far ahead of the arrival of its projectile, and actually thus caused very much more commotion through fear than through any actual danger. You heard the discharge, and died of fear long before the arrival of the projectile.

Besides its own heavy corps artillery which was now arriving, the IIIrd Corps had been assigned a considerable quantity of French artillery. As I have before remarked, the French, always great artillerists, had in their long interval of stabilized trench warfare learned more than ever to rely upon the almost unlimited use of artillery. Now, with the American and the French corps artillery on hand, our old long-range, slow-arriving, German gun could not at any one time annoy us for long. It was evidently too big to be moved very often and, once located, we could "shoot him up" in good Western or French style.

A little way behind the first headquarters of the corps at Coulange was a little village. In passing through I noticed always a string of soldiers and civilians halting at a grave out on a field. Many times during the period my corps occupied this region I passed that same place; and never, whether early or late, did I fail to see a continuous stream of men passing that same grave. It was Quentin Roosevelt's. So great is the fame of a name. Even in the midst of war and continuous danger, men did not fail to pay their respect to it.

Now, after some weeks of continuous fighting and small operations along the Vesle, with one effort follow-

ing another to cross at this point, that, and another, but no united or serious effort anywhere, the French Sixth Army was ordered into "quiet," and to place itself rather in a defensive than in an offensive position. I did not relish the order. It meant a renewal of the hard work of trench-digging and fortification-making. I had come to find this as actually more trying to American troops than fighting. Under such conditions they could arrange to "dead-beat it" better than in actual combat; it was harder to control them and maintain discipline than in offensive battle. This change of plan took my corps headquarters back some eight or ten kilometres to a farmhouse near the village of Fresnes. Here it was very quiet. In fact, as I said our orders imposed quiet.

The enemy was evidently ready enough to accept a like condition. He was not aggressive when we were not. Right up in our front lines, however, the contact with the enemy was close and dangerous. The conditions there were never easy. The narrow stream of the Vesle was the general line of separation of my front line and the enemy. I do not know who put it there—whether the French did it long ago or the Germans in their last retreat—but the river was full of concealed barbed wire. It was as much as a man's life was worth to attempt to cross, whether by swimming or wading. From one end to the other of my front line this was the condition, and I confidently expected, and so it turned out in the end, that no crossing of this stream would ever be made except upon a general advance.

In the hope, however, that his army would be able to advance alone, General Degoutte had, as I have said,

held on to certain small points, notably Fismes, on this river, where for a few yards American troops had passed the stream. These points were all commanded from the river bluffs and hills just to the north. Advance at any point on my front seemed hopeless from these so-called bridgeheads. Yet the French general was constantly insisting upon raids from these small points with a view to enlarging his "bridgeheads."

These small operations seemed to me to offer no chance worth the risk and the loss of life. On my right and left were French corps that apparently took quite the same view. In Fismette, the portion of the village of Fismes on the north side of the Vesle, I had a single company of infantry, 150 men, of the 28th (Pennsylvania) Division. One day I was ordered to make a raid with this company. It was carried out with great determination, but the bluffs of the river to the east, north, and northwest were lined with enemy machine guns, and the company, thus covered on three sides by the enemy's fire, had no success. It was driven back into its cellars in Fismette. This company could be reinforced and fed at night only across a broken bridge, now not even a foot bridge. This crossing was swept from two directions by enemy machine-gun fire, and men crossed, whether by day or night, only at intervals, and then only a man at a time. In short, men could not count on getting across.

It was evident that whenever the enemy desired he could wipe out the company on the north bank of the Vesle. After its failure in the raid ordered by General Degoutte, I ordered that company withdrawn to the south bank of the Vesle man by man at night. My chief-of-staff, who was very much in favour of the French general's idea of "bridgeheads," knew

of the order which I was going to give. When I returned from Fismes late in the afternoon, I found the French general at my corps headquarters and learned that my chief-of-staff had informed him of my order to withdraw the company. The French army commander ordered me at once to replace it. This was done.

Three or four days after this, without my being able to reinforce it or save it, completely at the mercy of the enemy, this company was wiped out by an enemy attack. Then I noticed that the French communiqué of the day reported that my IIIrd Corps had repulsed an enemy attack. When the French army commander appeared at my corps headquarters he offered me as consolation for his error this French communiqué. It was at least acknowledgment of the responsibility for the mistake.

But it did not console me for the loss of the company, or for the only accident of my military career. I reported it at once to General Pershing in the following letter:

#### HEADQUARTERS THIRD ARMY CORPS

American Expeditionary Forces

G

France

A.P.O. 754, *August 28, 1918.*

GENERAL J. W. McANDREW,  
G.H.Q., A.E.F.

MY DEAR GENERAL:

I am informed that to-day's German communiqué (which I have not seen) states that the Germans captured at Fismette yesterday 250 Americans. A part of my command until yesterday occupied Fismette.



I had there some 190 officers and men altogether, infantry. If you will look upon the map you will see the position of Fismes, a large village on the south bank of the Vesle. Just opposite Fismes on the north bank is the small village of Fismette. Opposite Fismes the village of Fismette, and no more, was occupied by us. Ten days ago, after a German attack upon Fismette which almost succeeded, I saw that Fismette could not be held by us against any real attempt by the Germans to take it and that to attempt to continue to hold it would, on account of the lay of the surrounding terrain, involve the sure sacrifice of its garrison, to which help could not be sent except by dribblets at night. I therefore decided and began to withdraw the garrison of Fismette some 300 metres back across the Vesle River into Fismes. Before this was finished, the French general commanding the Sixth Army, to which I belong, arrived at my headquarters and, learning of my orders for withdrawal from Fismette, himself, in person, directed me to continue to hold Fismette and how to hold it. My orders were changed in his presence and his orders were obeyed. Yesterday morning the Germans made a strong attack upon Fismette from two directions, taking the village and killing or capturing almost all of our men who were in it.

I request that the Commander-in-Chief be acquainted with the facts in this case.

R. L. BULLARD

Major General, N. A.,

Commanding IIIrd Army Corps.

R.L.B./rfm

Some time later I saw General Pershing himself. He told me that he had seen the letter; that he understood.



He was much irritated and asked me with vehemence:

“Why did you not disobey the order given by General Degoutte?”

I did not answer: it was not necessary to answer. The General had spoken in the vehemence of his irritation.

While I recall this incident with some bitterness, I must still give General Degoutte credit for being ever ready to help me and my corps. And he was a fighting man. He never ceased to press the enemy.

## CHAPTER XXV

### THE FRENCH MORALE

FOR a year after reaching France I was with the French. For some three weeks now, while tussling with the enemy along the Vesle, I was not only fighting beside but also commanding the French. This greater responsibility naturally turned my thought and attention more upon them.

The Italian defeat at the end of October, 1917, coming currently with the Russian defection and American slowness of entry into the war, greatly depressed the French. It did not show suddenly but seemed to come upon them in a sort of slow, dogged resignation which became more and more fixed as in the succeeding weeks and months Italy not only showed little or no comeback, but was calling to the Allies for help as the United States forces in Europe in the same months showed little war-effective increase, and as the Germans more and more threatened their great spring offensive. The French had in those days been expecting too much of our national effort as the Germans later expected too little.

Yet there was no sharp, manifest, open gloom. It was a state of sorrow, of darkened hope, which I at the time feared would prove fatal to French aggressiveness for the rest of the war. French civil and military authorities were putting forth their best efforts to help improve morale in themselves and others. "To-day

[November 25, 1917], I heard a vigorous, cheerful, fighting French general [Hirschauer] speak. His spirit was contagious. It did me good to hear him. I shall try to imitate his spirit and determination." In those dark days I was thrown much among French troops and saw their officers and men. I lived for a week in a mess in free and close relation with the officers of a French division headquarters. These men had been at war from the very beginning. Their sleeves were covered with columns of gold chevrons showing wounds and long service at the front in field and trench. The memory of no one of them could reach back for even a few weeks without coming upon comrades, brothers fallen and lost, gone as they also must expect to go. All had lost and were still losing. Yet there was not gloom among them: there was a quiet patience that amounted almost to cheerfulness. They faced present danger with care but unflinchingly and seemed not to worry about the future, black as it looked. The mess lived well and formally. There was no demoralization. The conversation was upon ordinary subjects, cheerful, often gay or even jolly. And the French soldier—he carried the calm, steady manner of the veteran, no matter how youthful his looks.

The depression was there and not going away.

"December 3d. In England, France, and the United States there is much talk of fighting on, but now they are beginning to say 'to the end.' The end may be anything. There has recently been put in France a resisting government. That is the spirit, but even since the new government went in two weeks ago I see signs of loss of interest in the people. *Whatever may be the spirit or complexion of the Government, France*

*is not going to fight* [offensively, I meant] *any more in this war. They have finished unless forced by Germany.*"

During the last half of 1917 the French had fought little, the British much and hard. The enemy was not forcing the fighting upon either and there was plainly for the British no hope of any real success. They said they were "wearing the enemy down." Wearing the enemy down, indeed! Any fool could see that they were wearing themselves down. I could not understand why they persisted in fighting. Since then Marshal Haig has told us. The French commander, General Pétain, had asked it in order to attract the enemy's attention away from the French, who, in their reduced morale, could not now fight. This explains the apparent senselessness of the British is such persistent, hard, unprofitable fighting at the time. And that fighting did draw the Germans to the British front. Any enemy order-of-battle map of the time will show the enemy about twice as strong on the British as on the French front.

And, *en passant*, why could the British continue the fight and the French not? The state of exhaustion seemed about the same for both. I believe the answer lies in the one word, discipline. French officers, our officers, and others have seemed to think that French soldiers were exceptions to the generality of soldiers; that they did not need, that they would fight without, the hard bands of discipline found necessary in other peoples. Those bands of discipline, as is well known had consequently never been, and were not in 1917, put upon French soldiers as upon the British. No severer, no more exacting discipline—as it seemed from all reports and indications—was ever placed upon men

than was placed upon the British in the last half of 1917: they could fight on. The French were never placed under such discipline: they could not fight on and they did not. I do not believe that the French were or are exceptions to the rule of discipline. Certainly, without a discipline such as the British had, they did not in the last half of 1917 fight aggressively, as the British fought.

The winter passed with ever-growing rumours of the great German offensive in the spring. I could see little change in the French manner. It was waiting, resigned. I can never forget how calm and self-contained, how unflurried yet how unenthusiastic, how noiseless officers and men alike seemed in the great movement made by the French to meet the fearful drive of the enemy against the English front at the end of March, 1918.

Miles and miles of them passed in column, steadily marching toward battle, deliberate, self-possessed, quietly smoking, silently gazing at me and other passers. No excitement, no worry or despair on those faces, only calm, a look not of determination but of resignation to go on and face whatever lay before them. I cannot think that they believed that they could stem the awful tide of German victory; they seemed only to feel that they could face it. In those days the "Tiger" was vehemently declaring to the French people that the poilu was saying, with determination, "They shall not pass!" I think the poilu never said it; I think he never believed it; I think he only felt and acted: "I will go and face it; I cannot stop it."

Yet, I say, there was not gloom, but a calm facing of what lay before. Death, annihilation, to fall and pass



as they had seen many fall and pass for ever from their world. I wondered if these men were thinking of these things. Doubtless; but they moved on, looking calmly at one as they passed. Surely where the war takes a good man, it makes and puts two in his place. Men may be lost, but manhood is never diminished by war.

The impulse of the German drive of March, 1918, against the British front spent itself and came to a halt, as it were, in breathlessness rather than from resistance encountered. Before the Germans could gather themselves for another start, the Allies had faced and stabilized them. America now was fully aroused and began to pour her thousands daily into Europe. The spirit, the morale of all the Allies began to rise, but before it could go far upward came the second great German drive that punched the Château-Thierry salient, threatening the fall of France.

Say what they now may to the contrary, the bottom again went out of the morale of the French as of all the Allies. It was then that, on a visit to it, I was so frightened at the position and condition of the French Sixth Army between the Germans and Paris. That army could not stand up and was not standing up before the Germans. In one of the most desperate situations of the war, with its back almost against Paris, it was still giving way before the enemy.

Before, at, and after Soissons, American troops fighting beside them had quite regularly declared that the French lagged, failed to keep abreast in attack. That, it is true, is the sure cry of the inexperienced, the excuse of those who have themselves not gone forward—"Our flanks were exposed because our neigh-

hours would not advance with us; we couldn't advance"—but the uniformity and number of these claims carried some conviction of their truth.

The ill feeling (it amounted almost to that) which I found existing between French and Americans in the French Sixth Army when I entered it was due very largely to the Americans' belief that the French would not stand beside them in front of the enemy. At the end of the summer of 1918, almost to the end of the war, the French, though rising in morale, were fighting warily, with little offence, by no means it seemed to me, with the *élan* for which they have always been famed. They were weary now. They faced the enemy, but they faced him without heart. They were the most war-worn, war-exhausted poor fellows that the world has ever held, I am sure. They had seen war in all of its deadly phases, they had seen so many comrades fall at their side and disappear for ever, so many irresistible drives of the enemy, that stolidity was upon them and offence seemed dead within them. When required they went through the form of executing an attack, but they put no push into it.

I could not blame them. At this stage of the war it looked as though the enemy's lines were composed of only machine guns, the most deadly arm that this war developed. To attempt to drive against these enemy machine guns, except after a complete wreck of his line in an overwhelming attack by fire meant only sorrow. The anxiety of the commander of the French Sixth Army to acquire little bridgeheads over the Vesle resulted in repeated unsuccessful efforts to push these troops against such machine-gun fire. Attacks would start in due form, but the French troops had

the wisdom always to stop before annihilation. In this they were most skilful. Long experience had taught them how to save themselves. American troops, doing the same thing beside them, lost twice as many men.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### BEYOND THE VESLE

ON THE IIIrd Corps' first coming into line, we had heard stories of traps, bombs, poisons, and various kinds of explosive tricks prepared and left by the retiring enemy to kill thoughtless soldiers of our army coming behind them. A nice German helmet left upon the ground is picked up, or a door to some attractive apartment is opened, causing a fatal explosion. I had taken pains to warn our men of these things, and we escaped with very few accidents.

I think, also, that down to the lowest German soldier, the enemy were now realizing that they were being beaten and that frightfulness and cussedness would not only fail to create their intended effect, but would be greatly in their disfavour in the final settlement.

The country over which the IIIrd Corps advanced had been completely cleared of everything of service to the life of the soldier, and villages and farms had been very completely wrecked by artillery fire from both sides. But as in most other cases coming under my observation in 1918, the greater portion of the wrecking was done by the artillery of the Allies, not by that of the Germans. In the last year of the war, artillery ammunition seemed abundant and superabundant with the Allies. They simply sent it upon the enemy's position in streams. The French, as I have said, used it to save their infantry. They told me that the

British were far more profuse than they in its use, and they (the French) were inclined to be critical of the British for indiscriminate, reckless waste of ammunition.

I was struck by the scorched, burnt appearance of the whole country. It was charred and covered with signs of the use by the enemy and our own men of every single bit of concealment and cover that could be found on or underneath the surface of the ground. Every hill that sloped away from the enemy and gave a little cover, every clump of wood or hedge that gave concealment, and every village or house that gave any shelter had been utilized by the enemy, or by us, to its last foot. Hills and slopes were honeycombed with individual trenches, wherein a man could lie down protected by friendly Mother Earth and in the hope that he might arise again. Everywhere on this continuous battle field were the signs of combat, scattered equipment, arms, ammunition, clothing, tools, rifles, everything that a soldier carries. I was on this ground from the Marne to the Vesle for six weeks, and when I left, salvage parties were still engaged in gathering up these things. All these were signs of a sullenly threatening enemy. He was being pushed backward, not driven.

While my headquarters were at the village of Fresnes, the Sixth Army, was held rather inactive by the orders it received. (It was time. We had been butting our heads uselessly and at some hurt against a strongly defended German line, on the bluffs just north of the Vesle.) Our front line, of course, was still in close contact with the enemy but our succeeding echelons were less active for a week or ten days. In this time came the usual influx of American and foreign visitors to see the sights.



Among them my own son, an officer of engineers, who had been ordered back to the United States to raise other engineer regiments and return to the seat of war. Little did he or I think that almost before he could reach home the war would have ended.

There came also, in the form of an old Spanish general of Cuban birth, a pleasant reminder of my long-past service in Cuba. General Monte Verde was tremendously voluble, and was delighted to get up close enough to the front to see an enemy shell burst on the spot where he had been standing two minutes before. After that the old man appeared proud enough to consider himself a veteran of the whole four years of the war! I had seen him ten years before on a visit from his adopted country, Spain, to his native country, Cuba. Now this chance meeting made the world seem very much smaller. "General," I said, "in this war I have missed something which I have carried everywhere else with me in the world since I was twenty-four years old but could not bring to this war."

"What is it?" he asked.

"My 'Don Quixote'." As a Spaniard, he was delighted.

"You shall not be without it in this war any longer," he said. "I shall be returning to Spain at once, and I shall send back to you a field copy of 'Don Quixote'."

He kept his word and I soon received the "field copy" of the old don.

Far off to our left in the direction of Soissons we heard from time to time heavy cannonading. The French Tenth Army (General Mangin) was still having a great struggle and going almost as slowly as we, but the outer end of the enemy's backward swing, pivoting on

Rheims, was in front of the French Tenth Army. His swinging was affecting us but slowly.

At last, however, with much pecking and at heavy sacrifices, we were at points passing the Vesle River and the 6th French Army was authorized to press again. This carried my corps headquarters forward almost to Fismes, at Montaon Farm. The corps was resuming hard fighting.

In my corps at this time were a French division and the 28th and 77th American Divisions. On account of its reduced numbers, the French division counted for little. The 28th Division was a trained, comparatively experienced division, a part of which had met the enemy in his last great drive toward Paris, just south of the Marne, and had held on to him after that in his retreat northward toward the Aisne.

The 77th Division had been raised in New York City. It had amusingly been said of this division that, until it came to France, its soldiers had never seen a dark night. It had served beside the British lines a little while, then in a quiet sector of the Vosges Mountains, and finally had appeared in my IIIrd Corps. The men were of fine spirit but of little experience. In their first appearance on our front line on the south bank of the Vesle, they received a tremendous gassing from enemy guns north of the river and suffered something like eight hundred or one thousand casualties before their officers could lead them out of the hollows on to the knolls. The division's inexperience of country was brought out by its inability, at the end of a day's work, to locate itself. It could not tell where it was. I could never find it where it really thought itself. It was forward or behind or to the right or left always of where it reported itself.

And—funny—it was this division that afterward contributed to history and fame “The Lost Battalion” of the Argonne forest. Altogether when it came to me it was in this matter of locating itself the largest collection of “babes in the wood” that I ever saw.

Nevertheless, the spirit of the men was excellent. An incident quite illustrative of this, as well as of the habit of getting lost, came to light one day when in passing the division I noticed two men besmeared with mud, blackened with smoke and powder, dishevelled beyond anything I had ever seen, but still proud, cheerful, and smiling. In a raid which their division had executed at Bazoches these two men, precursors and type of “The Lost Battalion,” became separated from the rest of their command and, again like “The Lost Battalion,” cut off by the enemy, put themselves under cover and held on without food for some four days, at the end of which time they managed to extricate themselves from the enemy’s line, wire, and trenches and to reappear, vigorous and smiling, among their own comrades. Danger, thirst, and starvation had not made them ready to give themselves up to the enemy, as they could have done any minute in those four days. They had the right stuff in them even if they would get lost, this division!

Added to its inexperience, the division also had some hard knocks while under my command. In the short space of a month, and in its first fighting, it had three different commanders. This was a great handicap, no matter how good the commanders. In consequence of these unusually hard conditions, while it was under my command I felt a greater interest in this division, I believe, than in any other that I knew in the war.

The Pennsylvania and the New York divisions remained under my command for nearly two months upon the Vesle. They lined the south bank of the river, mainly in the open under the eye of the machine guns and artillery of the enemy upon the hills of the northern bank. I have rarely, if ever, seen troops under more trying conditions. From his commanding position on the hill, the enemy literally dominated them in a position in which they, nevertheless, had to remain quiet, without advancing or retiring, but they were on the spot and they stayed there—harried day and night by the enemy. Literally a blade of grass or a bush could not sway without calling down hostile fire. The enemy was nervous and peppery. The situation called for nerve courage, and skill, and these divisions were developing and showing all these qualities.

Through the 1st and 3rd Corps, in the fighting between the Marne and the Aisne, passed a large number of American divisions, most of them quite fresh and inexperienced. Far back of our lines and camps my provost marshal now began to gather large numbers of American soldiers that had straggled from these various divisions. The French villages were full of them. Relatively to the number of American soldiers that had been here, the stragglers were few, but actually their numbers were great. Popular public impressions to the contrary notwithstanding, we had in our army dead-beats and deserters, evaders of battle and danger. When to-day after the war, I read in their histories the bragging of some of our divisions of the fierce warrior bravery and high sense of duty of all their men, all, without any exception mentioned, I cannot help remembering the great numbers of their dead-beats that we herded up.



This was done in justice to those who had not defeated. Since the war, in our own country, there has been in Congress and elsewhere almost a hysteria over a few cases of severity which our American courts-martial exercised toward some few of our men. In fact, the crisis was never sufficiently strong to cause our severity even to approach that found necessary in the British armies. We executed perhaps a dozen; they, I was told, scores. I doubt not that had we been as long in the war as they, we too would have been reduced to a like necessity.

It is well for posterity to know that Americans were not all model soldiers, not all faithful. At the end of the war Paris was filled with American criminals and cried out about it. There was public denial in the United States, and even from Paris, I believe, but Paris knows the facts. They were there and remained there long after our armies had left France. General Harts and "Hard-boiled" Smith had done much, but not all, to clean up the situation: they deserved better than befell them.

When at length the enemy retired beyond the Vesle, his west (right) flank was moved more rapidly than his left, in his swinging movement upon Rheims as a pivot, so that my small French division toward Rheims was still upon, or to the south of, the Vesle, while my 77th Division on the opposite flank was to the north of that river. The passage had been accompanied by such tedious and piecemeal operations that they made no impression upon me as a battle. Yet the impression of the entire service of a month in this region remains with me as a continuous strain of fighting and pressure upon the enemy.



My corps headquarters was at Montaon Farm, an ancient chapel located upon a high hill. Some three weeks before it had been occupied as a headquarters of one of the brigades and had had to be vacated because the enemy, soon discovering this headquarters, had promptly turned his heavy guns upon it and knocked in one end of the farmhouse. But now, in the slow march of events, the enemy had gone back almost to the Aisne with his heavy guns and had abandoned his attentions to the farmhouse to give them to places much more pressing and threatening, nearer to his front.

Once across the Vesle, General Degoutte assembled the higher French and American officers at my headquarters and ordered an attack for his army, himself giving the directions on the spot. The work was to fall mainly upon my corps. I do not remember the length of time which he allowed for the preparation of the plan and means, and for the distribution of the orders for the attack. I do remember that I considered it wholly inadequate and so stated. The French artillery commander did the same. General Degoutte, however, would not brook discussion. He cut us both short and ordered the attack to be made with whatever means could be assembled and whatever preparation made in the brief time that he allowed. It had to be done. So at it we went.

My corps covered the main front of attack. We made it with considerable dash on my left and centre, driving the enemy practically down to the Aisne. But upon my extreme right, where was the worn French division, the enemy practically held his ground; and in the centre, where the 77th Division had not maintained good liaison between its units, it was found that some

of these units had gone beyond certain organizations of the enemy which had remained in position. These units of the 77th Division, caught in the flank the next day by machine-gun fire, were unable to hold the most advanced positions which they had gained and were pressed back. However, they did not lose much ground. Their line was only straightened.

Though the worst prepared I ever saw, though not coördinated or held in proper cohesion during the advance, the fight had yet been a fair success. For its bad features, the army commander, General Degoutte, was plainly responsible: he had not allowed sufficient means, time, or preparation. The advance made, however, was worth the effort, and the cost paid was not heavy; but I am convinced that had more time been taken to allow the preparation of plans and communication of the orders, the enemy almost everywhere on the IIIrd Corps front would have been driven into the Aisne. As it was, the end of the operation left the corps exposed upon an open ridge between the Vesle and the Aisne, where for some days it suffered considerable losses from the long-range artillery fire of the enemy from far beyond the Aisne. But we stayed there.

By the time the IIIrd Corps had made its position secure upon this ridge, I received an order for its relief by a French corps. We were to go out for a rest after the long, hard, pecking struggle of some six weeks between the Marne and the Aisne. Almost without order came the French corps to relieve us, and almost at the same time the change of the 6th French Army commander. This army was, I believe, being consolidated with another, and operations in this region were plainly to slacken. I was not sad to go. The

service here from early in August until the middle of September had been arduous and difficult, involving many hard but small and unimportant operations.

Altogether the service of the IIIrd Corps between the Marne and the Aisne is remembered by me as the most satisfactory and about the hardest that I had in France, mainly due to a sort of feverish, nervous activity of the army commander, who rarely allowed sufficient time for the preparation of any of the numerous operations that were conducted on my IIIrd Corps front.

The Château-Thierry salient, under the action of three armies of French and Americans, was now a thing of the past. In it the enemy had been but a short time, but his preparations here, as wherever else he occupied ground in France, indicated that he never intended to give it up. One could not look at his preparations anywhere that I saw them, from near Switzerland to the North Sea, without knowing that if Germany had won this war, all of that part of France that was in her hands at the end of the war would have remained in her hands forever. All material, whether for peace or war, was utilized. All farm machinery and implements had disappeared or were everywhere being gathered up to be carried off. The Château-Thierry salient was filled everywhere, even in this short enemy occupation, with such immense quantities of ammunition as very plainly indicated that he had very high hopes, even past midsummer of 1918, of forcing his way to Paris and obtaining victory over the Allies.

In his present retreat northward, the enemy had carried away great quantities of this ammunition and war material, but great quantities of it could not be

removed, and remained upon the ground. In two months he had covered this great salient with his narrow-gauge railroads. These were especially necessary for him because he had not the motor transportation in which the Allies were so fortunate. His lack, however, never seemed to hamper him. Everywhere he promptly put down his narrow-gauge railroads and things seemed to go as well with him as if he had all of our motor transportation.

An old French corps commander, General Nevil, made short work of the relief of my corps headquarters. One look at him would tell you that he was an experienced warrior, even if you had never seen his old, worn, brass-helixed trench cane, inscribed with the name of almost every battle of the war, great or small. As is always the man who has seen much and taken part in much with other men, he was broad minded and considerate. I shall always remember his indulgent smile and two words to me on hearing the explanation of one of my division commanders that a neighbouring French division, having failed to keep up with his own in the fight, *he* could not advance.

*"Comme toujours!"* said the General.

As after Soissons, the organizations that had composed my corps were widely scattered in our relief. In marching out of the old salient there was some confusion and interference with each other. Nothing else was to be expected, because the correct laying out by the staff and the exact execution by the troops of such movements are the highest test. Do them without confusion or interference, and there is nothing which you cannot do. Marches, too, which like this are not in the presence of the enemy, seem invariably to stir up a

feeling of irresponsibility amongst the troops. "Out of danger" is taken to mean "beyond the need of obedience."

My corps headquarters were now pointed in the direction of the American First Army.



## CHAPTER XXVII

### SOUILLY AND RAMPONT

WHILE my IIIrd Corps was serving between the Marne and the Aisne, from early in August until well into September, 1918, General Pershing, breaking his former habit of frequent visits, ceased coming to visit us. It is true that the times were strenuous and he was busy; but the tide of war had turned in the last half of July, and something was happening especially to demand his presence and attention elsewhere. The explanation first developed in his crushing-in of the salient of St. Mihiel. But that, too, had now passed, and he still was not appearing among us. Something else was coming. The withdrawal of my Corps from the French Sixth Army and the placing of it in the region of Verdun was the beginning of the explanation.

On September 9th I left the Sixth Army and went to the headquarters of the American First Army, commanded by General Pershing himself. I found them at Ligny-en-Barrois, near where the 1st Division was placed on first going into training for the war, more than a year ago. Ligny was full of the headquarters and tremendously but suppressedly busy. Troops, trains, and everything that could attract attention of the enemy's airplanes or spies were kept studiously out of sight, and officers and men were the dumbest that I ever saw. It was evident that something bigger

than ever was brewing. I was a major general, but nobody took any notice of me, and to reach the Commander-in-Chief I had to pass many anterooms. One felt that things were stirring. I had no inclination to waste anybody's time: business was in the air.

At Ligny I did not learn what was really going to happen. I did not ask. Long ago I had learned to await orders and announcements. I knew only that my IIIrd Corps was to go to Souilly, the old headquarters of the defence of Verdun, and that I was to report to the French general, Hirschauer, whose Second Army now faced the enemy in this region. This order somewhat unsettled me. I had been serving now for more than a year with the French, and while I knew and especially admired General Hirschauer as a good soldier, a positive, decided, and aggressive leader, with whom I had been before this, I had begun to want to serve now with my own people.

To Souilly leads the "Sacred Road," the road that had saved Verdun in the great German attack of 1916 and indeed, in the eyes of all Frenchmen, saved France. Perhaps they were right. This recalls how Frenchmen in their own minds fasten upon a single thing as pivotal. With their dramatic nature, they hang success or failure upon a central thing, which failing, all is lost. With intense admiration and satisfaction they tell of the thousands of workmen in continuous lines on both sides of this road during all of the siege of Verdun, keeping the road in condition for the passage of everlasting trains.

In coming out of the Marne-Aisne region the IIIrd Corps parted with all the divisions that had served in it there. Even the corps artillery disappeared and I

never saw it again. The corps headquarters and a few corps troops only were left and went with me to Souilly. That was the way with corps and armies in France; they consisted permanently of only a few organizations. All others were added to them according to the need and the mission.

Souilly I found to be a mighty cantonment, with temporary barracks and a great railhead. Everywhere toward the front the country was filled with old cantonments, and everywhere were signs of the awful siege that had gone before. Forests and fields were covered with them. The village had been a busy city during the siege of Verdun and was now becoming so again. Its headquarters had once in the days of their glory held the Germans at bay, and somehow the place now had a sure, confident look about it. It seemed a stern, tried, self-reliant veteran that knew himself.

I fell heir to the billet of General Pétain. After the discomforts of the Marne-Aisne region I was glad to be in it, and again felt how much better the European system of billets and cantonments was than the American system of tents. I found that the French Second Army had in their line facing the enemy one American white division and a couple of American Negro regiments. My own was so far the only American corps in this French army. Almost without explanation or understanding I found my headquarters made the responsible headquarters for these American troops and for all the others which soon began to arrive.

My corps was not destined long to remain at Souilly—only three days. Again almost without explanation except that Souilly was wanted for an army headquarters we were pushed on to Rampont. American

railway trains in ever-increasing numbers were bringing in our troops and supplies. All glided about in the most unusually noiseless manner for American troops and trains. So bit by bit I could see that something great was gathering here, something of importance was going to happen, and it was to happen quite in the way of J. J. Pershing—without announcement. You knew it when you saw it: no herald went before. Rampont had long been a French corps or division headquarters in the great fighting about Verdun. It was in a ravine that paralleled the enemy's line; and the bluff hill on the side toward the enemy happily caught the great projectiles that he was still throwing upon the region (now attracted probably by the passing of trains at the railroad station). These great projectiles at first caused much concern, but the bluff, as we found, perfectly defied the spot. The skilful French had located the place. I was soon comfortably in billet at Rampont. How well our billeting officer had learned to do his work!

Arriving American divisions and other organizations kept my corps headquarters very busy placing them in concealment along the line west of the Meuse at Verdun, toward the Argonne forest. The work of my G-3 (assistant chief-of-staff in charge of operations) was piling up. I had but one where I should have had two officers upon this work. Organizations were arriving so numerous that there was but one way to place them—quickly, arbitrarily, and finally. There was no time for explanation, choice, or diplomacy; troops had to be placed, and placed at once so as to get out of the way of others arriving.

In a few days after my arrival at Rampont I was

practically in command of and directing more than half a million men. For the success of the great movement that was evidently to follow, secrecy and concealment were absolutely necessary. The enforcement of these two things was a hard duty. The freedom, the lack of discipline, the liberty of personal action, which are characteristic of all Americans, became very troublesome and dangerous characteristics here among our new troops. They didn't see any enemy, they saw no especial reason for concealment; they were going on a march of which they knew nothing; they felt like taking things easy and going as they pleased.

The going of these troops into position was a test of their discipline and training. They kept themselves concealed and observed the orders of secrecy in exact proportion to the discipline and training of the divisions to which they belonged; and it is a curious fact that the fighting which followed in the subsequent great battle confirmed in every way the test made of them in this way before battle. Divisions that best observed the orders for secrecy and concealment were the divisions that fought best. In the battle, too, the divisions that I observed did well in exact proportion to the thoroughness of their training and the amount of their experience in contact with the enemy. Mere willingness to fight does not make soldiers. It is admirable, but against a trained enemy it is ineffective. Not only my own headquarters, but the headquarters of the American First Army, were constantly occupied in enforcing these orders for concealment. Day and night we were at it. In my anxiety it seemed that the enemy's long-range bombardment had increased, which seemed to signify our failure. He may have discovered



something, he was probably not wholly ignorant of what was passing; but neither was he, I later concluded, well informed of what we were doing. Had he been, he would no doubt have been better able to resist.

While I was lining up this great army, General Pétain came to my headquarters on a friendly visit. I do not know whether this man had this same knack with others, but he had made me feel that I was very near to him, almost dear. His gentle dignity and kindly serious manner won me. I had seen him last in the black days just after the great German drive that had punched the Château-Thierry salient deep into the Allied line. Then his person looked neglected, his cheeks sunken, his countenance black, heavy, and drooping, his eyes bleared and weary as though he had not slept. Now, with victory swinging in our direction, his eye was bright, his cheeks rounded out, his step elastic, and his manner almost light. The change was laughable and I told him so. He took it in fine humour. Things were going well with him these days.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### THE MEUSE-ARGONNE

BY SEPTEMBER 25th, troops, supplies, and trains all seemed at last to be on the ground. All these, I believe, had passed through my hands to their places. The great dumps of ammunition, food trains, forage, gasoline, engineer material, and what-not were there. General Pershing's headquarters had appeared at Souilly. A click of the kaleidoscope and the units group themselves into corps. Piecemeal for two weeks the army had been coming together, and its subdivisions were now "set" for the parts they were to play in the greatest battle ever fought by American troops.

These parts became clear to them as the troops gradually took up their positions. Three American corps reached from the Meuse to the Argonne forest; there were two small French corps to the east of the Meuse. My own IIIrd Corps' sector lay just west of the Meuse, along the Forges brook, reaching from the river to a point some ten kilometres to the west, south of the great enemy strong point, Montfaucon. Along this line, during the long course of battles about Verdun, had fallen thousands of Frenchmen. Not a foot of it but had been cratered by the enemy's great guns, in some places two or three times over. There had once been villages, farms, and woods. Maps showed where they had stood. They were there no more—levelled

all by the hurricane of shells. The only things that had been able to remain were the soldiers, who had buried themselves in the bowels of the earth, appearing above ground in the light of the blessed sun only to meet in deadly struggle the enemy's onset.

"I was wounded out there on one of those hills," said my French aide, Lieutenant Secheresse. He could no longer locate the spot. As I looked at the ground I somehow felt that we were not to meet great slaughter here. The onrush of unwar-wearied Americans would quickly carry the struggle beyond this zone. It so proved. This time the skilled German fighter was not so much seeking to destroy others as to save himself.

But how should we pass the wire, our own wire as well as the enemy's? It lay between us and the enemy in endless tangle, the accumulation of years of defence on both sides—our own I say, as much of a problem as the enemy's. Successive battles had only added to its density and complication. How to pass it was a worry for everyone concerned. Everybody thought, schemed, and devised; everybody had a plan—wire cutters, "chicken wire" bridges over the top of the entanglement, axes to cut and break it down, lift details, breaking down details, tubes of explosives and shell fire to make lanes. When the time came, we went over it and nobody has told how. Doubt always and difficulty almost always disappear before action. The Forges brook, running through a marshy bottom churned into deep mud by shell-fire, poisoned by thousands of gas shells, also troubled us. It, too, was passed and nobody knew how. No obstacle stops men determined to go ahead.

Rarely have I seen anything more carefully or com-

pletely planned and prepared for than the beginning of the battle of the Meuse-Argonne. I remembered the question of the French staff officer a year before in Lyon, when he saw one of our detachments lost and straying over France—"Have you no staff?" We now had a staff.

On the wonderful French maps the plans showed the immediate and remote objectives of each corps. The maps in many bright colours reminded me of the criticism of the American officer who a few months before had remarked to a French general that the French staff were going in too much for making "Easter eggs," referring to the many coloured areas of oval shape on these maps. And now our own staff were making "Easter eggs."

In all these preparations there were some failures. Two brigadier generals and one major general who were slow and unenergetic or careless, who were not impressed by their responsibilities in preparation, shortly lost their commands upon my recommendation; and later, in battle, I know of two other major generals who lost theirs in other corps near me. This of course is hardly believable as we read only American histories of our fighting in France. These never refer to any failure or laxity in battle or duty by even the humblest American soldier.

As I read some of these narratives I know we are now going to transmit to our children the same exaggeration of uniform American duty, bravery, and prowess as fill the popular histories of our Revolution—such histories as made it necessary for General Upton to tell the truth in his "Military Policy of the United States."

The hardest work that I did or saw done by others in

France was the holding of men to duty in service and battle. In the early days some of our military theorists who had been little at the front desired to reduce the military police used for this purpose. As our fighting increased these military police had, on the contrary, to be augmented in every way possible. An unbroken line of them now followed our attacks.

This arrangement of all troops completed, General Pershing came on a visit of verification. He inquired about things in a very good-humoured, agreeable, almost careless way; yet I knew that underneath his easy manner was inexorable ruin to the commander who did not have things right. He shows the least personal feeling of all the commanders that I have ever known, and never spares the incompetent.

My corps was to attack northward on the west side of the Meuse, having in line, from right to left, the 33rd Division (General George Bell), the 80th Division (General Cronkhite), and the 4th Division (General J. L. Hines). Behind this front line in the attack were to be held in reserve two divisions, my old 1st Division under General Summerall, and another which I have forgotten. These two reserve divisions were placed near the Meuse on account of anticipated danger from the enemy's right bank (of the Meuse) position on my right flank as we should advance. The 4th Division was to have the most difficult task in passing an enemy's strong point at Montfaucon, in being unmasked as it advanced against the enemy's artillery fire from east of the Meuse, and in approaching the enemy's position, which was known to be a very strong one. The two right divisions, the 33rd and the 80th, after a certain advance would, according to the plan, find themselves



against the Meuse River and were then to halt and face this river, forming a line of protection along the left bank against possible enemy attack from the east, while the 4th Division continued its advance.

The troops had been gathering and preparing for two weeks. It was the night of September 25th. Everything that I could do had been done. I went to bed without worry.

The 33rd was an Illinois division. I had served with its National Guard basis for long months upon the Rio Grande, in 1916, and knew it as reliable. It was, besides, commanded by a regular officer, General George Bell, known to the whole Regular Army as perhaps the most exacting inspector general that was ever in it. The division had been serving with the British and I found it in excellent morale, condition, and equipment. With the soldiers who composed it, its equipment and the general commanding it, I felt perfectly sure that it would do what was expected of it.

The 80th Division I did not know at all, but I was told that it contained many North Carolinians, who, with me at least, always have the reputation of being very steadfast, reliable soldiers, not unlike the Pennsylvanians whom I had just been commanding on the Vesle.

The 4th Division was a Regular Army division of already established reputation as a fighting machine. It was commanded by General John L. Hines, who had served under me as a colonel and a brigadier general in the 1st Division—a driving, hard-fighting, unre-laxing soldier.

Early on the morning of the 26th we attacked. That day my corps advanced almost as far as we had an-

ticipated. I was feeling good. We crossed the awful wire entanglements of No Man's Land and beyond; we crossed the Forges brook; the enemy's reaction in our front had not been violent and my corps that day had suffered no great losses. Yet we had had no walk-over. We had just made a start. More fighting and further advance were necessary before we should reach the final corps objective—the enemy's third position.

The fighting was renewed the next day, the next day, and the next, before we reached that third position. On one of these days the whole army was gathered and made a concerted attack and advance. The resistance of the enemy was steadily stiffening. Wherever his machine guns were encountered—and they were encountered after the passage of his first line—the progress was exceedingly difficult. Indeed, his first defence seemed to be almost wholly machine guns. But now also, as my corps went forward, we began to catch a heavy artillery fire from the high ground on the right bank of the Meuse. It was becoming exceedingly annoying, more so as we advanced. Two days of the first four of the battle were used in my corps for clean-ups of enemy machine-gun positions that we had passed over in the advance. These clean-ups showed a capture of many of the enemy, and of much arms and munitions and material. These four days about completed the work of the 33rd Division on the left bank of the Meuse and partially completed that of the 80th; they brought the 4th Division, on the left of the 80th, close up to the enemy's third position and our corps objective. They also left the 4th Division partially in and partially out of a wood, the Bois de Fay. In this posi-

tion it was getting a deadly enemy crossfire from both its flanks, because in its advance it had passed the divisions on its left and right at Montfaucon and near Brioules—two strong points of the enemy.

General Hines's advancing notwithstanding the exposure of both of his flanks was remarkably fine. Before the attack I had called together my division commanders and told them that in every fight in which I had thus far taken part I had heard division, brigade, and regimental commanders excuse their failures to continue the advance by blaming the units on their right or left for failing to come forward with them.

"I shall take no such excuse on this occasion," I added. "Each of your divisions maintains its reserve for the very purpose of protecting your flanks." That was enough.

In the two weeks' fighting in which I commanded this corps in the battle of the Meuse-Argonne the flanks of its divisions were many times exposed by lack of continuity of advance with other units on their right or left, but I never heard one complaint that the other fellow hadn't advanced.

The advance of my corps having reached the enemy's third position, our corps objective, and there encountered strong resistance, I moved my corps headquarters forward some eight or ten kilometres to Montzeville, whence I could better supervise operations.

In our halt in front of the enemy's third position a very great difficulty was being encountered in reaching the advanced troops with ambulances, food, and ammunition. From Montzeville across the old No Man's Land and up to the enemy's front line, a distance of perhaps seven kilometres, a road of pre-war days was

shown on the map. As we passed over this distance in the first day's attack there was no sign of this road except stones scattered in two or three years' ploughing by the enemy's great guns. It had been shell-cratered over and over. As our infantry line advanced, it was followed along this old road by a great force of engineers and pioneers who by sheer numbers, with tooth and nail, scratched and levelled and macadamized a road over which ambulances, food, ammunition, and artillery followed almost as rapidly as the troops advanced.

The workmen formed practically a continuous line on both sides of the road and swarmed back of the side lines like ants, gathering gravel and broken stone to be thrown upon the roadbed. They worked night and day without cessation, with a devotion not surpassed by the men who were risking their lives in the very front lines. They could use only the lightest implements, because their trains with heavier tools could not be brought for some time upon the ground. The men gathered stones by hand and brought them to the roadbed where they sank in the mud of late shell craters almost as if they had been dropped into a bottomless sea, so soft was the ground and so destructive the passage of vehicles. It was an exhausting, heart-breaking, discouraging, ever-continuous operation that lasted all the time (three weeks) that I remained with the First Army—and long after, I am told. But the road worked, and gradually solidified and hardened.

I consider it altogether—in making, upkeep, and operation—the most wonderful piece of work that I saw executed during the World War. The road was made and operated at the same time—operated at the



sacrifice of many machines and vehicles, but operated effectively for the supply of 200,000 men that had gone ahead. It supplied not only my corps, but in part also the corps on my left, with all their special troops. The traffic was managed by the "block" system used by the railroads of our own country. At all times, day and night, the road was covered by a continuous line of trains from one end to the other. Any block or breakdown was made known by telegram from one point to another upon the road and the trains halted at the block stations until the way was opened.

It took, as nearly as I can now remember, all my spare military police, a battalion of infantry, and some fifty officers to regulate the traffic and prevent blockades. Two of my personal aides were given to help in this. I did not see them again for two or three days and when I did again see them I was hardly able to recognize them, so muddy and exhausted were they. For a vehicle to make a round trip over this road it took always two and sometimes three days. Drivers and chauffeurs were frequently found sitting bolt upright sound asleep, their vehicles at a standstill. Great patience and still greater firmness and driving power were required to regulate and keep this road in operation. Along it at two or three stations were established kitchens that ran continuously day and night, feeding everybody that hungered, without regard to organization or anything else except the need. I wondered what our old-time ration experts of the old Subsistence Department would have said to such a plan.

After the two concerted attacks of the whole First Army in the first four or five days of the battle there followed a number of local attacks conducted by corps and



divisions in their own zones of action. Except for very trifling affairs, I never liked such operations. All of my previous experience was against them, and the results or non-results of these seemed further to justify my dislike. Except in a most limited way my corps got no results from them; and it seemed the same throughout the army so far as I could judge from the news.

I finally felt so strongly about it that I went to see General Pershing and expressed my opinion, but I saw no result. Directions or permission had been given to corps and divisions to concert action between themselves where necessary for success. My left division, the 4th (General Hines), in the first day's advance had gone entirely past the right division of the Vth Corps upon my left, leaving it, the 79th Division, in front of Montfaucon. In that neighbourhood the 79th remained struggling with the enemy two days or so some kilometres behind the 4th Division. I had in vain tried to induce the General commanding the Vth Corps to take concerted action with me in order to unite our two flanks. My left flank remained for days in the air, catching a deadly fire from our left front. This fire caused steady losses among my front-line troops in the Bois de Fay. Between the 7th and 10th I visited brigade and division headquarters of the 4th Division. They were fighting hard and uncertainly. They still had the Bois de Fay, whose southern edge was being swept by a terrible machine-gun fire from the enemy on both the right and the left flank. Passage or reinforcements to the troops in the Bois was impossible by day and by night almost so. The division was almost exhausted. Their food was used up and their ammunition almost gone, but they still held on—weak, scattered, and disorganized

by heavy losses and repeated enemy counter-attacks, but still in the Bois de Fay. The division commander, General Hines, greatly concerned, half asked me to allow withdrawal from the wood. "No," I answered; "we've got to stay there; we give up nothing. Your division has done magnificent work and shown wonderful courage."

"Then tell them so!" he exclaimed, and I did so at once from his German dugout headquarters at Cuisy.

I ordered a corps airplane to fly over and scatter down to the troops in that wood (that was the only way they could be reached) a citation for their bravery and an encouragement to stick. They did stick, while I ordered all the artillery and all the airplanes that I could lay my hands on to bombard Brioules and the fort near it that was decimating these men with machine-gun fire, and to bombard also the enemy's batteries in the hills east of the Meuse. Brioules and its fort upon the hill were smashed and destroyed by airplanes and heavy artillery. Their destruction relieved the 4th Division. The troops in the Bois de Fay were reinforced, fed, and saved. Their losses and the strain upon them had been very great, the greatest that I have known. I shall remember this as one of the finest if not the finest deed that I have known. They were gassed, bombarded with artillery, and riddled with machine-gun fire, but they had stayed, and the enemy was at last pushed out of the wood by their drive.

While the 4th Division was still struggling in the Bois de Fay with its left flank in the air, a part of my 80th Division was moved across the rear of the 4th and placed on its left just north of Montfaucon. Here it found itself in close quarters with a very strong enemy

in the Bois des Ogons. This wood was tremendously entangled with barbed wire and filled with nests of enemy machine guns. It lay upon the line which divided the Vth Corps' zone of action from that of the IIIrd. Liaison, united effort, to capture it was difficult. Our lines were wavering here as in the Bois de Fay. The 80th Division made two strong attacks upon their portion of the Bois des Ogons, each time getting into the woods but each time being thrown out by the enemy.

While my corps was at a standstill struggling at Brioules, Bois de Fay, and Bois des Ogons, it seemed to me that also the whole First Army was nearly at a standstill. Daily I heard reports of attacks by corps and divisions, but the gains were small and irregular and the losses too great for the results. In most of these attacks, both general and local, our infantry, on account of difficult ground, trenches, wire, and enemy machine-gun nests, were unable to or did not follow closely our rolling barrage. These barrages did not annihilate the enemy. That enemy had learned to bury himself and, our barrage having passed over him, to rise from his pits and, with the skill of the trained old soldier, stop or slaughter our advancing infantry, coming too far behind the barrage. This is how in almost every instance our advances had come to a halt. Then the infantry had to be helped by further artillery fire. The infantry of the whole army, I heard, was thus calling for an unusual amount of artillery fire for their protection. The consumption of artillery ammunition was considered to be enormous. In all new troops that had come under my observation this had been a difficulty. It spelled lack of training and experience.

For a week, it seems to me, the First Army was practically at a standstill. Daily communiqués told us of our allies' progress on other fronts: we were making none. Officers in high command, I know, were worried. I was among the number, but at last success at Briulles, Bois de Fay, and the Bois des Ogons relieved me. My corps was in position now to take up a further advance. And of the Bois des Ogons an incident: The 80th Division had twice in strong attacks taken the wood and twice had been thrown out with severe losses. The general commanding, when I visited his headquarters, half asked me to be allowed to give up the attempt. "Give it up and you are a goner; you'll lose your command in twenty-four hours. Make one more attack. This time you'll take the wood and throw the enemy out." He did. He was given a corps shortly afterward.

General Hines (4th Division ) and General Cronkhite (80th Division) are to-day major generals in the Regular Army. Both passed their straining points in the woods beyond Montfaucon.

During the wavering and standstill of the past week or so I had visited my front very carefully. I found the brigade headquarters of the infantry of the front line almost all too far back. I ordered them all forward with, I think, a single exception. That night on reaching my corps headquarters I found an irritated message, given out, as I remember, by General Pershing, to the whole army declaring, with regard to that whole army, what I had just found in my own corps that day. I was especially proud to report at once that I had already found the fault in my corps and had remedied it.

No tanks had been assigned to my corps. I heard of their operation elsewhere only after the battle had



been in progress for a week or ten days, and this is what I heard: That the infantry of the front lines, whom these tanks had come to help, saw such tanks for the first time, looked at their operation with great interest and admiration—but without support!

The whole IIIrd Corps being greatly beset by the enemy's fire from east of the Meuse, on October 7th the 33rd Division, having attained its objective west, was detached from me and ordered to the east bank of the river. It was there to join a French corps which had been unable to advance sufficiently to drive back the enemy's batteries east of the Meuse and so to prevent their crossfire on the rear of our lines west of the river. I was especially sorry to lose the 33rd. It had shown unusual effectiveness and self-reliance in the long, difficult preparation for battle and in taking its objectives in the battle with equal ease and confidence. It had gone into battle with the handicap of having an artillery brigade not its own, whose horses were reported not in good condition. Its own artillery brigade was, in the exigencies of service, serving with another organization. For this reason the 33rd had in my corps been assigned the most limited field of operation of any division therein, but this it had thoroughly cleaned up and it was now going elsewhere.

The right division of the Vth Corps on the day of the first attack, September 26th, was the 79th, touching the left of my corps. This I understood was the first serious fight in which the division had taken part. As I looked at the map and saw the dominant feature of the whole terrain, Montfaucon, against which this new division was to go, I felt sure that it would have a difficult time. Montfaucon is one of those towns of the



Middle Ages built by some local chief as many of them are, upon a dominant hill-top for defence against ever-warring neighbours. It stood above the whole surrounding country, with a long, clean, open slope in the direction from which the 79th was to approach it. To me it looked like a terrible obstacle to have to go against. It proved so for the 79th. That division stopped before it the first day, and was relieved some days later by the 3rd Division. Soon after it had been taken and after part of my 80th Division had moved to position just north, I visited Montfaucon and found the general commanding in a wonderful house serving as headquarters and observatory, which, I understood, had been formerly occupied by the crown prince of Germany. Montfaucon and this spot were a veritable aerie. During the time of its occupation by the Germans the town on the south side had been completely shattered by French projectiles from the direction of Verdun. Now its north side was being completely shattered by German shells from the north. From either side it made a constant target for great guns, and I stayed there no longer than was absolutely necessary for the execution of my business. It was a place where even rats had to stay in their holes. About the general's headquarters people were dodging about like a band of thieves hiding from the police.

Near my front lines—while still in the Bois de Fay—I witnessed a magnificent spectacle—four or five squadrons of our airplanes passing over to harass the enemy's rear. The whirr of their wings filled the air with an angry, terrifying roar. So great a number—one hundred and twenty or more—I had never before seen. To the Germans who must already have been

feeling their inability to resist, so great a number at one time and place must have carried discouragement. The whirr of their wings is terrifying even to good troops. It makes them feel that they are helpless underneath, thus dominated from above. Our troops, especially new troops, had felt this and had made bitter complaint of being undefended against the enemy's planes. Yet no such number of enemy planes ever appeared where I served. I never saw enemy planes at one time anywhere exceeding a dozen.

In the enemy's surly retirement between the Marne and the Aisne his active airplanes gave ours all we could do. They destroyed many of our balloons: I once saw two or three go as fast as the enemy aviator could fly from one to the other. Now in the battle of the Meuse-Argonne I can remember seeing comparatively few enemy airplanes; only one as far back as my own headquarters, and it was then being pursued by two of our own—going for all the world like a wild bird in terrified flight before a hawk. Certainly now the enemy was outnumbered by us in the air. This was another sign that this great battle would have but one end, the defeat and driving of the enemy from the field.

Brioules, the Bois de Fay, and the Bois des Ogons being cleaned up on my front, my corps got its "second wind" and was ready for another jump forward. I selected a new corps headquarters at Malancourt, nearer my front lines, but personally I never moved thereto. Before this could be done, returning one day from a long horseback ride far out among my front-line organizations, I was met with the news: "You have been appointed to the command of the Second Army, with headquarters at Toul, and General J. L. Hines takes

the IIIrd Corps." I had been somewhat prepared for the promotion but not for the separation from this battle. My corps staff, I knew, had been functioning well in the battle. In no fight before or after this have I ever known so little straggling. On the fifteenth day of the battle I had just pushed forward the headquarters of my front-line infantry brigades, just before General Pershing's criticism went forth to the whole army about these higher headquarters being too far to the rear. My corps had fully attained its objectives and was ready for another push. The next day I was designated to the command of the Second Army. I wondered if these things were connected.

Ten days previously rumours had reached me that General Pershing was forming a group of armies of which, it was said, I was to command one, probably the First. A few days later General Pershing himself said to me, almost without introduction, as if he thought that I knew his plans, "I am going to appoint you to one of these armies." I asked him no questions. I was too much moved to talk. I simply shook hands with him and left him. And now the assignment was to separate me from the First Army in the midst of the battle. I make no pretense of loving a fight, but I hated to quit this one. It was not ended; I knew that it would be long before it would be ended, but I knew how it would end.

In all of the fighting of the two past weeks I had seen that the enemy, while by no means being chased off the field, was not able to give that attention to my second line and reserves which would indicate successful resistance. As between the Marne and the Aisne, he had here again had his chances against masses of men,

animals, and wagons, and had not used them, except for a time from the heights on the east side of the Meuse, now closed out by our advance there. Nor had he been able to use gas against us to any great extent, at least on my front. I could see his end here: I hated to miss it.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### THE SECOND ARMY

THERE is little permanent about a corps. What I had come to me of the IIIrd Corps just before Soissons and remained with me until now in the Meuse-Argonne, was the headquarters staff and perhaps a few special troops. Many divisions, at least a dozen, had come, fought with me, grown dear, and gone. It was now my turn to go. It was a battle parting, a heartfelt good wish without good-byes except to a few at the safe corps headquarters. The others were grimly facing the enemy in battle far to the front. For me in a farewell order to be calling their attention at such a time upon myself—safe and far from the dangers and death threatening them—I could not do it!

*“Toul, October 14.* Came by auto with my two aides, Captains Shirey and Witherspoon, via Bar-le-Duc and Ligny, to this place October 12th. I passed at Souhaines-la-Grande the second echelon of my old IIIrd Corps headquarters to tell the officers good-bye and to thank them for their loyal efforts. Really, they had not done badly. They began three months ago with a very imperfect organization that functioned very roughly and bunglingly. To-day it functions well.

“I stopped a few moments at First Army headquarters at Souilly to see the Commander-in-Chief. He informed me that he would give up the command of the



First Army, and he intimated that he would form a group of armies of which General Liggett would command the First and I the Second; that he had found it necessary to quit the direct command of an army, as it forced him to neglect greater interests. I thanked him for the mark of his confidence in naming me to this new command.

“On arriving at Toul I found the Second Army about half organized. It has two corps (one being largely French) and some 17,000 army troops, the latter mainly labour and engineer troops. The chief of staff, Brigadier General Stuart Heintzelman, I have known for a long time, and in every way he suits me. He is disciplined and considerate altogether.

“But I found no army artillery or even artillery staff. However, I have started on the staff with a good chief, Major General Lassiter, one of the best artillerists that I know. In asking last December for a commander of the 1st Division Artillery, I had thought of him and of General Summerall. I finally obtained Summerall. I now feel especially lucky in getting General Lassiter, and he justifies my confidence. In some three weeks he has organized an effective army artillery staff of about one third the strength of that of the First Army. His strong point is this very thing, organization.

“Aviation also remains to be started. I have begun on that. Three branches of the army seem under way. Altogether I make a much better start with an army than with the IIIrd Corps in the middle of last July. Yesterday and to-day I have been inspecting the staff departments. Some are quite ready to work and are working; others are not. I shall push them without

rest. They have got to get ready." (I was expecting an early offensive for the Second Army.)

"I find that my army headquarters are as big and cumbersome as the great French army (the Eighth) that I saw in August of last year, and that astonished me for its size. I remember its map-making plant. Now I have one as large."

"In trying [Diary, October 15th] to supply deficiencies in the Second Army I find the usual defect, to wit: too much talk, a great deal of expectation, and too little realization. This has been the great American failing in the war. We have talked at long range. We have filled the air with loud words about things we are going to do. Is it a characteristic of us Americans to make a 'blow' about everything that we do? Before we did anything toward getting into the war, we were crying out over the world that we were going to have more and bigger guns and more men and more munitions and more ships and more and swifter airplanes, submarines, and chasers, and more and deadlier gas, and more and bigger and deadlier everything than any or all the other belligerents. It is not much of an exaggeration to say that we made good only on the men: the gas came too late, and the airplanes and many of the other things did not come at all."

I was again encountering in the Second Army the difficulties which I had encountered in the completion of the 1st Division the previous December. I was having my requests answered in futures rather than in presents. But my requests now were in terms of tens of thousands where last year they were in hundreds.

"I see very clearly [Diary] that an army is a much larger thing than a corps. Indeed, a single staff section

is as large as a corps staff entire." In its very start this army was six times as great as the division which I was then commanding, and yet the army was in its mere beginning.

I am not superstitious, but my health, vigour, and good feeling, so reduced under the awful neuritis in my right arm from April until September, was now so returning that I thought, with some little misgiving, of my same good feelings on starting on a like new mission six months before, the day before the neuritis literally knocked me down. But my misgivings were never justified. My health was returning. It was fortunate, because all my available strength was needed in the work of the formation and preparation of this army for a heavy attack which I knew it would soon be called upon to make.

"Soon" in those days really meant what it said. The Allies were pressing the enemy with all their might to bring the war to a conclusion. The Second Army could not long be left to form and train itself at leisure.

The army front extended from the Moselle at Pont-à-Mousson to the Meuse Heights near Verdun, connecting here with the First Army.

Since the reduction by the Americans of the St. Mihiel salient, about a month before, the American troops left in this sector had been preparing for an American advance in the general direction of Metz. Our railroad, roads, and other communications were being brought across the No Man's Land of the old salient to connect with the corresponding old German communications leading into the enemy's country. Presumably we should soon need them in an advance from here.

The roads and railroads over across the old front line of the St. Mihiel salient had been completely destroyed during the war. It was a hard job to replace them. The country round about was wiped out. "Yesterday and to-day [Diary, October 17th] I passed through French villages that had been for four years in the hands of the German. A few unfortunate women had been left there during the German occupation. Their stories, their sufferings were sad, unprotected as they were against German brutality and lust. . . .

"As I passed over quiet areas of beautiful country utterly destroyed by the enemy, as I saw great forests killed as men are killed by shell and shrapnel, as I saw the infinite pains and labour to accomplish all this to hurt his enemy and protect himself, I was tremendously impressed with the German's will to conquer, his great determination and infinite patience. I saw hundreds of miles of trenches revetted with wood, stone, and cement, thousands of dugouts made almost as great and complete as houses; roads, houses, railroads, and miles and miles of wire entanglements. It looked like the work of a world, and it is all wasted in so far as any material return is concerned—a deeply impressive sight.

"Villages for many miles, about four miles on both sides of No Man's Land, have been utterly destroyed. The country cannot recover for a hundred years. When we shall have beaten the Germans and are making terms, those who are in charge of imposing our terms should be required to visit and see the country which German ambition and savagery have desolated. It would harden their hearts and exact justice from these barbarians. They have utterly torn up and desolated



all the villages that they have occupied. But to think of the long time that they have held France hard in their grip and to see the ruin they have wrought makes one know that they had France at the throat and would surely have choked her to death but for the coming of the Americans."

In the month which had elapsed between the battle of St. Mihiel and my arrival on the spot, little, it seemed to me, had been accomplished toward bridging this break across the devastated region. How little, startled me; because I felt sure that we should soon have to cross this gap in our general drive against the Germans. The railroads were not there to take us across. For an army there is one great question: transportation. Having all things else—men and munitions, money and training—but lacking this, the army can do nothing. My whole military experience had impressed this truth upon me.

"The work that I looked at to-day [Diary, October 17th] was work to enable the army to take position, 'get set' for a new start against the Boche—road and railroad work of the army engineers to enable the army to advance across the old front into the territory lately held by the Germans. Its difficulty and its absolute necessity for the success of any further or future operations against the Boche were most striking, most evident, and impressed me strongly that the great, the important rôle was to be played by the engineers in further war. They have the greatest opportunity of of all."

The motor and horse transportation also, especially the latter, were in no good condition. I proceeded to wake up everybody upon the subject of transport—



the engineer officer to push his railroad, the motor transport officer to put his motor trains in better condition, and all division commanders to improve the condition of their animals and wagons.

I intended to be ready. Great outcries of helplessness and of lack and deficiencies were soon heard, but no excuses were accepted. Very quickly this pressure began to tell. It was the only way to save American troops from demobilizing themselves by allowing their animals to die of hard work and neglect. The peaceable American's idea of the amount of care necessary to keep animals in service in war was wholly inadequate. Surely it was changed in this army, for when a few months later the Second Army was to go out of being, it probably had at that time the best-conditioned transport that an American army ever had. Certainly I never saw its equal before or since.

For ten days or two weeks following my joining the Second Army my diary is filled with notes of visits, breakfasts, dinners, and conferences with the French and American officers. These occasions gave me a good chance to form estimates and establish understanding relations with them. Two branches of the army especially, engineers and artillery, gave me concern; the first because of the great importance of its work in case the army should have to take the offensive, as I expected that it would soon do; the second because it was just being organized. Of the officer at the head of my artillery my diary of October 20th says: "A slender, thin man, alert mentally and physically; interested in everything that should concern him, especially our present work; earnestly discussing the ways and means of doing that work; fine, keen, at-

tractive manner"—one of the best artillerists that I know.

Among the French generals whom I had formerly known here were General Blondlat, now commanding a corps in my army, and General Passaga, commanding a corps in a neighbouring French army.

Blondlat was a type of the French colonial officer, more direct and simple than the home-serving French officer but perhaps not so scientific; of agreeable but not effusive manner; and militarily, as I have before said, no lover of the defensive methods of trench warfare. "I don't believe in digging in. We may as well fight it out in the open," I had heard him express as his sentiments some months before in a meeting of the corps commanders of his army. But the big, handsome General Passaga of the home-serving French army, had even more zest and interest in his work.

Passaga commanded the corps in which the 1st Division first had gone into line against the enemy nine months before. Better than any other Frenchman that I know, he knew how to win the American heart. His big, manly person and hearty manner and voice did it. His nervy treatment of the enemy also spoke confidence. He was aggressive. Why the French command kept this man always in a quiet sector, I could never understand.

The French generals serving in my army showed complete readiness to accept my orders. The fact that all of them had but a few months before been of higher rank and were still of greater war experience than I made no difference.

At the end of one of these conferences or breakfasts, on October 23rd, my aide handed me a newspaper

containing the announcement that the President had named me to be a lieutenant general and to command the Second Army. I cannot remember now that this promotion had before this time been even a subject of thought with me, certainly not more than of a passing thought. In telling me that I was to command an army, General Pershing had said nothing of promotion, and no diary entry of mine at the time mentions it. My thoughts were on the Meuse-Argonne. Ten days later (November 2nd) I wrote: "Yesterday received official notification of my appointment as lieutenant general and took my oath of office as such. All that does not seem to make a great difference in my life and feeling." My whole waking time, day and night, all my thoughts were being given to the problem of preparing a great army for a coming offensive—apparently to be made in the neighbourhood of one of the enemy's great fortifications—Metz.

"Work with the men that are given you," was the advice of an experienced, wise old officer of our great war between the states, given me in the Spanish-American War as I was going to raise and command my first regiment. The advice had proved good in that war in a small command; it had failed me in the IIIrd Corps and was failing me again in the Second Army. The problems in corps and army had been so great that I had been obliged in both cases to carry with me out of the 1st Division to the Corps, and out of the Corps to the Army, officers whom I had known and who knew me and my ways. To take these men from the IIIrd Corps in the midst of battle had made me feel like a robber, but the imminence of the offensive for the Second Army soothed my conscience. I needed them.

## CHAPTER XXX

### THE 92ND DIVISION

**A**MONG the divisions of the Second Army I found one Negro division, the 92nd. Its generals, colonels, and division staff officers, and a considerable number of its field officers were white men, mostly of the Regular Army. This division especially interested me because in the Spanish-American War I had raised and commanded a volunteer Negro regiment whose conduct had added to my reputation as a soldier. Having passed a pleasant boyhood with the Negroes and had this satisfactory experience with them in my earlier military life, I found myself with most kindly feelings toward them; and my interest was stirred now in France by finding this Negro division in my new army. I felt some doubt, however, as to the success in war of a Negro command as great as a division. General experience seemed to be to the contrary. I was at the time exceedingly busy in the preparation of the Second Army for an offensive which I knew would be coming very soon, and I could give the Negroes no more thought than I was giving to any other portion of my command. War, hard war, was before us, and race could make no difference.

About ten days after I joined the Second Army the proper officer of the army staff mentioned that some of the Negro officers of the 92nd Division were to be tried for cowardice. I was too busy with my work of organi-



zation to give the matter especial attention. It took the usual course of such work. A few days later, in the same way, it was reported to me that one of these Negro officers had been sentenced to be shot for cowardice. Then there came a rush back upon my mind of all my past experience with Negroes. I remembered how our government seemed to expect the same of them as of white men, or at least placed them in positions that so indicated; how politics constantly forced for them the same treatment as white men, when they were very different; how they themselves insisted upon such treatment; how surely, notwithstanding all this, if the same treatment were given black as white, it would cause trouble for him who should so deal it out; how, finally, the politics of our country had forced the formation of this Negro division.

All this constructive equality I regarded as an injustice: it is not real. So I now inquired carefully into the matter and found that in the battle of the Meuse-Argonne a part of the 92nd Division in line beside the French in battle had twice run away from in front of the enemy, causing the French, for their own safety, to request the relief of the Negro division from the fighting line. Some thirty Negro officers were involved in this running away. Five, the clearest cases and supposed leaders of the movement, only five, had been selected for trial by the law officers of the Second Army. A court-martial composed of officers from another, a white division, had been ordered for this purpose.

Before this court one Negro officer had been tried, convicted, and sentenced to death. It startled me, for much experience and observation in such matters



had taught me that where even the most exact justice is meted out to Negroes, if meted out by white men alone, it becomes to Negroes injustice and converts them in the eyes of their fellows into martyrs for the race. I therefore at once ordered the court to suspend trial upon the other cases and determined personally to investigate the whole matter and see the state of mind of the Negroes of the 92nd Division before I should proceed any further with the trials. It took about a week for me to complete this investigation. It showed a lack of feeling among the Negroes of the division, a general lack of concern in the whole matter. Many of them knew nothing and almost all of them cared nothing about it. Those who knew seemed to believe that the white court-martial would give justice and especially a court-martial composed of officers of another division. The same investigation also developed the fact that there were some fifty other Negro officers of the division who were at that time being examined as to fitness to retain their commissions, all before boards of white officers. I ordered all of these boards to suspend their work of examination. But in the end I had to allow the court-martial, having once begun, to continue its trial of the four or five leading cases charged with cowardice. All five were found and sentenced as the first, exactly, I felt sure, as any white man would have been sentenced.

Yet I knew that these Negroes could not be held as responsible as white men, and I deliberately set about finding any possible flaw that would excuse an upsetting of all of the proceedings. To this end I called to my assistance General E. A. Kreger, Judge Advocate's Department, representing the War Department in the

American Expeditionary Forces. He it was who would finally review these cases. He could at the time find no flaws in them, but later he or some other did find one flaw in one case. The last man tried testified in his own behalf that his own captain, who was killed in the runaway, had given him orders to run! There was no other living witness to this captain's order; the captain himself was dead. So the case against the accused was completely disapproved and he was set free on the ground of uncontroverted evidence of having received an order to run!

I forwarded these five cases for final consideration by the President, with the recommendation that they all be let off from all punishment. I felt perfectly sure that it would so result, and so it did. In 1919, a year later, the President ordered them all released. As I now remember it, the other twenty-five officers and the rest of the battalion escaped everything, even reproof.

The 92nd Division had a complement of exceptionally good higher officers and general staff, mostly white regular officers whom I knew. But among them all, except the general in command of the division, I found when I made the investigation of their charges of cowardice, the most profound discouragement. Not one of them believed that the 92nd Division would ever be worth anything as soldiers. Every one of them would have given anything to be transferred to any other duty. It was the most pitiful case of discouragement that I have ever seen among soldiers.

"The Negro division [Diary, November 1st] seems in a fair way to be a failure. It is in a quiet sector, yet can hardly take care of itself, while to take any offensive

action seems wholly beyond its powers. I have been here now with it three weeks and have been unable to have it make a single raid upon the enemy. They are really inferior soldiers. There is no denying it. Their Negro officers have an inadequate idea of what is expected of soldiers, and their white officers are too few to leaven the lump."

"Spent the day [November 5th] going about the army and seeing. I saw especially the Negroes, the 92nd Division, which after more than a month in the trenches cannot yet make a raid. It failed again on one to-day. Poor Negroes! They are hopelessly inferior. I've been talking with them individually about their division's success. That success is not troubling them. With everyone feeling and saying that they are worthless as soldiers, they are going on quite unconcernedly.

"The 92nd Negro Division is not making much if any progress toward efficiency and I am afraid it never will be worth anything as a fighting unit. Its division commanding general is not very strong as a military man. I'm inclined to think he will have to be 'S.O.S.ed,' and I'll have to have this done."

From about the 25th of October, then, until a few days before the armistice I put forth every effort to have this division execute some offensive operation, such as a raid, against the enemy. The division was large and composed of exceptionally husky, vigorous-looking soldiers, well equipped. The enemy troops against them were of second or third class, not by any means the best. I provided the most skilled French and American advisers and instructors for them in an effort to have them execute a successful raid. I never succeeded even to a slight degree. As I remember, in those three

296 PERSONALITIES AND REMINISCENCES OF THE WAR  
weeks this division of some 27,000 men captured one German!

The Negroes were a great disappointment. This experience did not agree with the experience of the Regular Army of the United States with Negro soldiers. I could not ascribe the failure to poor quality in their higher officers. These officers generally, as I have said, were good, in most cases excellent. The French had had like experience with their Negro troops in their front-line trenches against the enemy. The Negro, it seems, cannot stand bombardment.

Two or three days before the armistice I resolved to attack the enemy with my whole army. Before I could put my resolution into effect I received an order from General Pershing to do just what I had decided to do. The order was given to the 92nd Division, as to the rest of the Second Army. The division made no impression of consequence upon the enemy. "The poor 92nd Negroes [Diary, November 11th] wasted time and dawdled where they did attack, and in some places where they should have attacked, never budged at all. It seems to be as much the fault of the general as of the Negroes." "Two days ago [November 12th] and again yesterday the 92nd Division would not fight, couldn't be made to attack in any effective sense. The general who commands them can't make them fight."

The general seemed to me also to have lost sight of military efficiency in the racial "uplift" problem which seemed to fill his mind. With the prospect, too, of little occupation for these vigorous black men in the quiet days after the armistice, with sure complaints from the French population!

It is commonly believed among Americans that



French people have no objection to Negroes, but this I quickly found was an error. While there were very few French people in the region occupied by this division, they were not happy to have the Negroes among them.

The Negro is a more sensual man than the white man and at the same time he is far more offensive to white women than is a white man. The little acts of familiarity that would pass unnoticed in a white man, become the cause of complaint against the Negro. This special Negro division was already charged with fifteen cases of rape.

For these reasons, immediately after the armistice I recommended in effect that this division be sent home first of all the American troops, that they be sent home in all honour, but above all that they be sent quickly. The answer came that Marshal Foch would not, pending peace, approve the transfer of any division back to the United States. In answer I told the American headquarters to say to Marshal Foch that no man could be responsible for the acts of these Negroes toward Frenchwomen, and that he had better send this division home at once. This brought the order, and the 92nd was, I believe, the very first division to be sent home. I was told that the division was received at home with great glorification. I was perfectly willing that it should be; the American army abroad was relieved. My own sense of relief can be understood when I say that while a part of the division was waiting for its railroad trains to move it to its port of embarkation, among other things one poor Frenchwoman was ravished by five 92nd Division soldiers.

Altogether my memories of the 92nd Negro Division



are a nightmare. When all my thought, time, and effort were needed to make war against a powerful enemy, they had for a week to be given over entirely to a dangerous, irritating race question that had nothing to do with war-making, the paramount matter of the time. I fear that it will always be so with Negroes wherever they are in contact with whites. This thought and my experience led me to this conclusion: If you need combat soldiers, and especially if you need them in a hurry, don't put your time upon Negroes. The task of making soldiers of them and fighting with them, if there are any white people near, will be swamped in the race question. If racial uplift or racial equality is your purpose, that is another matter.

## CHAPTER XXXI

### THE ATTACK OF THE SECOND ARMY

THE work of organization and equipment for the first two weeks in the Second Army was hard and exacting. I had to pass so rapidly from one thing to another, to give my attention in quick succession to so many things, that I could not at the end of a day recall in what the day had been occupied. Attempting to work with an incomplete organization meant many details. To save myself from being swamped with these, I had pushed organization and equipment with all my power. In two weeks, by the end of October, I really had an army and a staff, and they were at work, able to operate in an offensive against the enemy. By the end of October there were 176,000 American troops, of three corps (five divisions and army troops), and this number was steadily increasing.

From the very time of my arrival I knew that I must soon expect to make an offensive. Marshal Foch's method of hitting first in one place and then in another made this sure. He had struck in his great offensive, first at Soissons, then on the British front, then at the St. Mihiel salient, then at the Meuse-Argonne and farther. The last was now almost finished. The next American blow, it seemed, would naturally be on my Second Army front. From the first, then, I had pressed work upon railroad, horse, and motor transportation, with this thought: that the next push would be toward

Metz. The French near me evidently thought likewise, because they, too, soon began work upon a railroad line bearing in the general direction of Metz. The prolongation of the Meuse-Argonne battle, and the consideration of the armistice proposal of Germany left the question of the direction of the Second Army offensive in doubt. The American First Army was apparently having a hard time driving the enemy in the Meuse-Argonne battle, as was shown by the rather frequent relief of high American officers of their commands and the frequent reliefs of divisions of that Army by troops that had been in rest behind the front lines. In this way a number of divisions had been called, and were still being called, from my own army to go to our First American Army or even to British fronts where other American troops were serving. The offensive for the Second Army was thus hanging fire a bit. Nevertheless, my Army was active against the enemy on its front, and that activity was telling. "To-night [Diary, October 28th] prisoners bring us news that the Boche in front of this army is getting ready to pull out. I imagine that there is some truth in it. I shall have to set about a scheme of following." We were short of transportation, but I determined that we should be ready to push the enemy in his retirement.

"*October 29th.* I went over the larger portion of my army sector from the vicinity of Pont-à-Mousson, on the Moselle, to Les Éparges, in the Woëvre region, visiting corps, divisions, and some brigade headquarters, and talking with officers about conditions. . . . I found in my inspections officers and men enthusiastic over conditions. They were daily making small but very successful local attacks and they were delighted.

They were all, however, undergoing much discomfort and often great hardship and danger. We were losing men every day, for the enemy was fighting."

We were thus constantly feeling the enemy, while at the same time rumours and prospects of an early offensive increased. On November 7th came this letter:

ADVANCE P. C.  
General Headquarters  
American Expeditionary Forces

Nov. 7, 1918.

*Personal & Confidential.*

LIEUTENANT GENERAL R. L. BULLARD, Commanding  
Second American Army, France.

MY DEAR GENERAL BULLARD:

The Commander-in-Chief has directed me to give you, *personally and confidentially*, an intimation of certain possibilities in the immediate future.

The French are preparing an attack in the region of Château-Salins. They have asked for the assistance of six of our divisions in this attack. The matter is still under discussion, and it is not certain whether or not the Allied Commander-in-Chief will insist upon our furnishing these six divisions.

In the event that General Pershing decides to send six American divisions to assist in the French attack, he intends that they shall be handled as an army under your immediate command. You would take with you your present staff, except that, perhaps, the supply part would function for you from Toul.

The Commander-in-Chief leaves to-night for Paris, and we hope to give you definite information within the next 48 hours. Until such information is furnished you, the Commander-in-Chief directs me to ask you to hold the contents of this letter strictly confidential between yourself and your chief-of-staff.

(Signed) FOX CONNER,  
Brig. Gen., Gen. Staff,  
Asst. Chief-of-Staff, G-3.

“Evidently [Diary] the Allies are not going to relax a moment on war making, no matter how many armistice and peace talkers the Germans may send us. . . . My army is harassing the enemy and capturing men daily. It is going well.”

As the question of the direction of the Second Army offensive had for some time been uncertain, so now the decision as to that offensive was held in abeyance by conditions elsewhere than on my army front. “I imagine [Diary, November 9th] that nothing will be heard until decision is reached on the matter of the armistice, and then——! . . . Incoming additional divisions indicate that my army is being built up by our general headquarters in France. Things will surely be popping from November 15th to December 15th if the Germans do not accept the armistice. I can see the signs.”

Thus, on the 9th of November the 2nd Army stood expecting to take the offensive—either straight toward Metz, pursuing a retiring enemy; or, as indicated in General Pershing’s letter, joining with the French attack in the Château-Salins region to the southeast of Metz.

“On the 9th [Diary, November 11th] it began to seem as though the enemy on the front of my army was grad-



ually withdrawing material and getting ready to retire. I therefore ordered a general advance for the 10th. Almost before the order could be issued, or, rather, could reach the troops, directions came from our general headquarters to do the very thing that I had decided to do. At the same time we seemed on the verge of an armistice; but the desire of the enemy to have an armistice had been brought about by fighting alone, so it was manifestly wrong now to desist from fighting. So on it went.

"November 10th, at 7:00 A. M., my four divisions in the front line attacked. They found the enemy everywhere and in very good strength and organized upon the strongly defended Hindenburg 2nd Line. We fought at it all day. The enemy seemed to strengthen from west to east, the ground being to him more favourable in the east. The 33rd Division—General George Bell—on the west, did well; the 28th Division, next, under General Hay, had some but no great success in advance; the 7th Division, under General Wittenmeyer, had hard fighting but advanced some, perhaps half a kilometre; the 92nd Division Negroes, under General Ballou, gained a good deal of ground but did the enemy little harm. Altogether, at night the line seemed to have advanced all along from one half to two kilometres—as well as I could expect. I did not expect the first day to do more than gain full contact and feel the enemy's positions thoroughly. This was accomplished, and so for the 11th of November I ordered his weak points to be attacked by concentrations thereon along the whole front.

"To-day [November 11th] the attack was renewed as ordered, but about 6:30 A. M. a telegram announced that armistice would go into effect at 11:00 A. M. and all fighting and advance must then stop. I gave the cor-

responding orders. Some of our divisions of the line had already been pretty thoroughly committed to the attack, others not. The former continued, the latter desisted, though all were partially at least engaged. As on the 10th, the best work was done on the west by the 33rd Division, General George Bell. The others accomplished little. But the fighting continued until the last minute. I went early, with an aide, to near the front line to see the last of it, to hear the crack of the last guns in the greatest war of all the ages. I stayed until 11:00 A. M., when, all being over, I returned to my headquarters, thoughtful and feeling lost." It was over!

"To-day's American bulletin does not give my army much credit for its effort yesterday. I felt that it was—and so, on inquiry, it turned out to be—the fault of our own Army's too modest report. I was out of patience to see that on their last day's fighting my army did not get credit for what it had done, so I 'blew up' the people who had failed to report correctly." Nevertheless, the American communiqué was not bad for us, as shown in the following copy—our part in italics:

"A series of local operations by the First and Second American Armies resulted in considerable gains to-day. . . . Beyond the eastern slopes of the heights of the Meuse the villages of Gibericy, Abaucourt, and Grimaucourt were taken. *In the Woëvre, despite stubborn resistance from machine guns and heavy artillery, troops of the Second Army penetrated the enemy's lines and drove him from several well-organized and strongly held positions. The towns of Marcheville and St. Hilaire were taken and the Bois Dommartin was cleared of the enemy.*"

Along with the order to desist from fighting and ad-

vancing at 11:00 A. M. came an order to mark very definitely the line at that moment occupied by our troops, and, nobody being sure that the war was over, to prevent fraternization with the enemy. The first was very easy. For the first time perhaps in four years, at 11:00 A. M., men on both sides showed themselves, plainly marking the line of the most advanced troops. Staff officers in numbers were on the ground to mark that line upon the maps. Indeed, it was "Ground-hog Day for staff officers," remarked a soldier.

The prevention of fraternization was a little more difficult. Now that the fighting was over, both sides wanted to talk to each other; each side was curious about the other. Besides, the enemy had in his lines a large number of Russian, French, and Italian prisoners whom he was very anxious to get rid of to us. He was having to feed them—very much to his dislike. "I saw [Diary] some of the prisoners that came from the Boche hands. They looked strong, but would naturally look so, as only able-bodied men could have walked, as they walked, the long distance of sixty kilometers to reach our lines. They had simply been turned loose by the Boche, but they were happy."

Quickly following the armistice came the rumour that the Second Army was to go into Germany. We at once began to prepare ourselves for this, and then a few days later it was officially decided to organize and send forward into Germany our Third Army.

"So mine—the Second Army [Diary, November 14th]—and the First Army are not to go. Of course everybody wants to go. I care very little one way or another."

The war, I felt sure, was over and I had had the long

experience of occupation of conquered territory years ago in the Philippines. It was not specially interesting.

"Yesterday [Diary, November 16th] and to-day busy making arrangements to help the Third Army in road and railroad repairs and subsequent supply after it starts forward into the Boche territory to-morrow at 5:30 A. M. These things have been made the duty of the First and Second American armies until the Third American Army has begun well to function and can care for itself in the Boche territory."

"Well [Diary, November 19th], our 3d Army advanced toward Luxembourg and Germany, part upon the front of my Second Army, on the morning of the 17th; but the Boche had already been turning loose prisoners of war, which were turned into our lines; and we had before this time to send into the Boche lines some small detachments with an officer or two to get information about prepared Boche mines. My army had its road and railroad work well on the way for the advance of the Third Army. Our help to the Third Army was, I believe, well done. That army had no difficulty, according to my best information, on our roads, and will have none, I think, about our railroads."

## CHAPTER XXXII

### THE ARMISTICE

SOME ten days ago (in the battle of the Meuse-Argonne) [Diary, October 14th] came the Boche's request upon President Wilson for an armistice. It was a surprise to me. I had been unable to see that he was hard-pressed by the Allies—well, yes, hard-pressed, but not enough to make him cry out for peace. We have been driving him, but not fast or killingly. To me it seemed, and still seems, that if peace came now it would be a Boche victory, nothing less. However, in his second note to Mr. Wilson, Mr. Boche showed a humility that astonished me. He deigned to say whom his chancellor represented when he asked for an armistice. This was in reply to Mr. Wilson's demand to know. Slowly opinion in Entente Europe is crystallizing against any armistice at this time. The fighting man and the European Entente want to beat the Boche to a finish. There seems no doubt of this, and I doubt that Germany is in a real frame of mind to grant any such terms as the Allies expect."

So little faith did I put in the earnestness of the Germans and their request for an armistice that for ten days I did not mention it in my diary! The enemy had so often before talked peace when they had no idea whatever of offering terms that would be acceptable to the Allies. They were conducting a sham peace offensive when the first American troops arrived in Europe in



1917. They renewed this with great vigour immediately after their great victory over the Italians in the end of October, 1917, and kept it up long. Indeed, from the days of Henry Ford's fool's errand in 1917, there had frequently been as much peace talk as I was now hearing in the first half of October, 1918. In all of these cases the talk was joyfully hailed by the uninformed, the great bulk of men concerned; but in all cases, their hope being without basis, their expectation and joy soon collapsed. The same was again to happen.

"Still [Diary, October 16th] public opinion, at first crying that peace was at hand, is slowly turning to the view that the war will go on. In his second answer to the Boche, President Wilson has talked a good deal but not said much. He has said some hard things that may have some effect on the German people or may be laughed at by them. . . . The news to-night from the First American Army does not show that it is making any great advance. At the same time it indicates that high-ranking officers are losing their places, which last means that these high-ranking officers are not beating the Boche, that they are unable to win any clear advantage over him." Peace, like the front lines after a hard fight, was "wabbling." Along with the impressions and discussions of the time there was no military weakening visible in the enemy sufficient to justify in the average mind the belief that that enemy really needed or was seeking to make peace. He continued too strong in the fight.

In the light of the subsequent armistice and peace, the uncertain impressions of this time seem strange. That one month before the armistice came, peace should be so

uncertain after four years of war and exhaustion, seems very surprising. The enemy was then apparently not being hard-driven; he was almost standing the Allies off. Peace seemed incredible. About this time a French liaison officer passing my headquarters told me that Marshal Foch had just sent a message to General Pershing to this effect: "Press the arrival of American troops in Europe and I think we can end the war next year." At about the same time, says the Italian general Badoglio, Marshal Foch, replying to a message from the Italian, stated that there would be four months more of fighting. All this explains why finally, on the morning of November 11th, Americans and all the Allies still doubted peace and were still fighting.

In the succeeding days and weeks of October and early November the Allies' fighting and pressure upon the enemy continued while the talk went on. "To-day [October 17] we hear President Wilson's third reply to the Boche peace demand. I am afraid Mr. Wilson will entangle himself and the nation in the talk. If the tone of British and French press and public men is any indication of what these want, there is little chance of any compromise for the Boche; yet President Wilson agrees to recommend or at least present to the Allies the Boche's request for an armistice. The English and French are shouting that the Boche must expect to yield everything, give up everything. Great Britain demands the German colonies, France demands indemnity and Alsace-Lorraine, Italy demands territory of Austria, the United States seems to demand recognition by Germany and Austria of the independence of every tribe and people that are found in all the lands between the southernmost Balkans and the northernmost

Baltics—a countless lot. Somebody has got to give up some claims or we must give up all idea of peace.”

“To-day [Diary, October 25th] we hear that the Boche request for an armistice is to be considered. Newspapers, English, American, French, German—the newspapers, in short of both sides—are talking extremes that would make one think of but one thing, to wit, continued and bitter war. I imagine, nevertheless, that peace will result.” “Daily [October 30th] the signs increase that the enemy has made up his mind that he must have peace. Some three or four days ago Austria said she wanted an armistice at once. The papers are full (but they have been so for four years) of Austria’s disorganization and political collapse. She may yet fool the world and come out of the war still holding together. She has certainly thus far surprised the world by her cohesiveness.”

“*November 2d.* Rumours reached us yesterday that the Italians were declaring an armistice with the Austrians. Not confirmed to-day, but they are parleying. So all seems tending toward peace. Yet, the Allies seem in no hurry to answer Germany’s demand for an armistice. It is now a month since Germany first made this demand, and it has been a week since Austria made her demand. Both Austria and Germany are being licked more and more each day, and we can well afford to let them both cry out for some time yet before we pay them any attention.” I, and other high-ranking officers about me, doubted that the enemy was in earnest in his demand for an armistice and peace. He seemed still to be sparring for advantage.

Yet the enemy’s conditions were changing. “Every day [November 3d] news arrives of additional collapse

in the enemy's political and military organization. It looks as though the Turk and Bulgar and all other of his allies except the Austro-German and perhaps the Russian Bolshevik, are lost to him."

The signs continued to increase during the next few days. "Yesterday [November 9th] was for all Europe a day of great excitement on account of the armistice negotiations. The time allowed the Boche to consider is exceedingly short—72 hours—but long enough. If he does not accept now he will have to accept our terms in the end." The news of the falling away of his allies was being confirmed. That was his ruin.

This same news had a very encouraging effect upon our own troops. "Yesterday [November 9th] on my inspection trip I found officers most enthusiastic over conditions. They had every day for the past week or ten days been making small but very successful local attacks, and they were delighted. But I see them all, officers and men, undergoing much discomfort and often much hardship and danger." Yet it was plainly time to press the enemy hard. I therefore ordered a general advance for the 10th," for the enemy's willingness to quit had been brought about by fighting. This was how I and all leaders upon my own army front felt. It was evidently the same over the whole Allied front from Switzerland to the North Sea; because notwithstanding the fact that negotiations for an armistice were progressing favourably, and notwithstanding the fact that on the morning of November 11th the armistice had actually been agreed upon, the English, French, and Americans were all found pressing the enemy at the very hour and minute that this armistice took effect. He was the suppliant for peace; let the fact be carried



home to him. The feeling everywhere among the Allies was that he had not been beaten enough, and that any relaxation of pressure before the very hour of the armistice would but give him excuse to claim, in the peace-making, that he had not been beaten, that he had not sought peace more than they, and that it was just a sort of silent agreement between both sides to quit fighting, in which agreement the Allies were as anxious as he. I felt therefore that we should press him up to the last minute.

And our men showed great zest in striking the last blows against the enemy. They too, notwithstanding subsequent complaints and notwithstanding the losses of the day, were anxious to hit the enemy a last blow.

A last act came some two months later. It was wholly unauthorized, the act of a private person. The colonel of an artillery regiment in my army, Luke Lea, a former U. S. Senator, of active mentality and body, found it monotonous in the devastated regions of France while waiting in after months for the Peace Conference to bring peace. He, like the whole world, knew where the German Kaiser was, and somewhat in imitation of the celebrated capture of Aguinaldo by Funston of Kansas twenty years ago, conceived the idea of seizing the Kaiser by a trick. Colonel Lea had a Ford car and an adventurous heart. Obtaining a leave of absence, with two or three trusted companions he managed somehow to bring himself and them, in his Ford car, to the Kaiser's home in Holland. Pretending to be American newspaper men who desired an interview with the Kaiser they were actually admitted to the grounds, but not to the presence of the ex-monarch. That monarch's mentor was a little shrewder than were



Aguinaldo's aides. Besides, Colonel Lea found that the Kaiser was well protected by an alert guard; and the only result of the expedition was some newspaper notoriety and Colonel Lea's call to our G. H. Q. and retention under observation until he could be sent home. But I wish that the colonel could have captured the Kaiser. It would have been glorious!

At once upon cessation of hostilities everybody wanted to get into the front lines and take a look at the enemy who now for the first time, like ourselves, began to show himself in the open. Stringent orders had been given that no one from our side should advance beyond the position held by our front lines at the hour of the armistice. It was extremely hard to execute the order. Our troops and the enemy's were within hailing distance of each other and both wanted to hail. The enemy, especially, seemed to want to fraternize. Individually he was not so hostile to Americans as to Frenchmen, and certainly our average American soldier, from living in his own country among so many German-Americans, was quite ready to recognize a non-hostile relationship with the German here.

Back of the front lines I could see the French joyfully preparing for the occupation of some of the enemy's territory. For several days the French soldier seemed to be unable to realize the truth of the armistice and the cessation of fighting. He seemed, however, to take spirit from the Americans and his other allies. "I saw to-day [Diary, November 12th] a line of eight or ten Americans, French, and British soldiers, arms locked, singing and walking together, in celebration of the armistice and the hoped-for peace."

At once orders were given from our general headquar-

ters to the armies on the line to send forward officers and parties to make arrangements with the enemy for the receipt of prisoners, arms, and property that were to be turned over according to the terms of the armistice. From these parties and from the Third American Army advancing into the enemy's territory following his withdrawal, we soon began to learn that the enemy at the time of the armistice was in very much worse military straits than we had supposed. Signs of disorganization and talk of mutinies and the degrading of officers began to come to our knowledge.

It was evident then that at the time of the armistice, when the enemy was asking peace, we had him worse beaten and in greater confusion than we knew. Not even our highest authorities, apparently, knew it. That enemy, skilful to the last, even in his defeat and disorganization, had kept this knowledge from us. To the very hour of the armistice he maintained a bold, strong front, pliant and yielding, it is true, but not anywhere deeply penetrated or seriously crushed or broken. As this knowledge began to reach us, the French and the Italians especially began to regret the armistice. While they had their enemy down they wanted to gouge his eyes out—finish him completely; and there was some little resentful talk against Mr. Wilson, who had brought about this armistice. More sportsmanlike, I thought, the English and the Americans accepted the result, rather admitting to themselves that they had not been astute enough to discover how badly they had beaten the enemy and how they might have required more of him at the time of the armistice.

All the after-talk which we have heard of regret that we should not have continued the war and beaten the

enemy worse is largely based upon knowledge derived after the armistice, not before. Colonel E. M. House, at the time a sort of personal representative of President Wilson, states that when the question of an armistice was being considered by the premiers of England, France, and Italy, General Pershing (in effect representing the United States) alone was for continuing the war. The others felt that their own war-wearied peoples, now knowing that Germany really desired peace and was asking it, could never (after the suspension of hostilities that would be necessary during the dead of winter) be induced to resume the fighting in the spring. Also, each of these premiers, on hearing that General Pershing was for continuing the war, remarked—in terms of his own language—“Grandstand play!”

## CHAPTER XXXIII

### AFTER THE ARMISTICE

NOBODY was sure that peace had come with the armistice. The world had in the last four years heard so much of peace only to see its hopes blasted, that now that peace had really come, no one, especially no fighter of the Allies, felt at all sure of it. The Germans had always had so great "a will to conquer," that it was hardly believable that they had been subdued enough to admit defeat. The Allied high commanders could not yet fully realize that peace was sure. They were determined to be ready for a resumption of hostilities. They could not bring themselves as yet to relax preparedness. But even if hostilities were not resumed, armies could not be disbanded at once. There would be a period of waiting—the most trying thing that can come to soldiers. Battle is not worse.

"To-day [Diary, November 14th] I have been continually occupied in thought and action preparing to meet the new . . . conditions that will arise from holding my army in a state of waiting for the peace. These conditions will be hard to meet, because waiting requires the highest discipline. Men become impatient, they cannot devote their thoughts to any particular purpose, they are hoping to 'quit,' they relax, let down, and become demoralized. Occupation, the most stringent and unrelaxing discipline are required to counteract these conditions." At every hope or sign of peace

soldiers set their hearts so strongly upon home that it is hard to hold them under the bands of discipline. I had seen them before under such conditions. I had seen them expecting to be mustered out and "going home." The best of them had always become demoralized. The like must be expected now, and it resulted. Soon after the suspension of hostilities an officer in charge of one of our schools for the instruction of officers and non-commissioned officers found it necessary, he afterward told me, to court-martial some two hundred—most of them officers—for misconduct and breaches of discipline in his school. With my experience of such conditions, I hardly waited for the armistice before taking measures for keeping fully occupied everybody in my army. I at once set all to work as though we expected to resume hostilities in the next ten days or two weeks. A few days after I had put these measures into effect, came an order from headquarters to do this very thing. After congratulating his army upon the results of the war, General Pershing added:

"There remains now a harder task which will test your soldierly qualities to the utmost. Succeed in this and little note will be taken and few praises sung; fail, and the light of your glorious achievements of the past will sadly be dimmed. But you will not fail. Every natural tendency may urge toward relaxation in discipline, in conduct, in appearance, in everything that marks a soldier. Yet you will remember that each officer and each soldier is the representative in Europe of his people, and that his brilliant deeds of yesterday permit no action of to-day to pass unnoticed by friend or foe."

I then assembled and spoke to my corps commanders,



made them assemble their division commanders, had the division commanders assemble their brigade commanders, the brigade commanders their subordinates, and impressed this need in this way upon all, down to the last officer of the army. "They will occupy you if you don't occupy them." That was the cue, and they took it. War weariness was forgotten.

The spirit of General Pershing's order was met. Everybody went to work. Strenuous training in every branch of warfare and for every arm of the service was taken up and kept up for months, far into, almost through, the winter, and long after it had become evident to everybody that hostilities would never be resumed. It was accepted by all, officers and men. I consider this one of the highest tests of discipline that was ever put upon soldiers. They knew that they were to fight no more. Yet with zeal, interest, and complete obedience they kept up this training for war and fighting. They were anxious and expecting soon to return home to go out of service—yet they still trained. These men, it seemed to me, were the men of whom he was speaking who said, "For a republic you must have educated men." I verily believe that the last soldier felt that this work was for his good.

Soon after the commencement of this drill there was added to it, under the orders of General Pershing, a very complete scheme of athletic and theatrical amusement. Theatricals and movies, baseball and football leagues and horse and motor shows covered every post and station of the army in France. Their aid in the maintenance of discipline, order, good conduct, and morality of our men was incalculable. Something was "doing" every day, everywhere. No army was ever before, or

probably will again be, so well entertained. It had in its ranks some of the best actors and finest athletes, and it brought from home for the purpose some of the best actresses in the world. And as to morality, this subject had indeed been preached and enforced from the first with so much persistence throughout the American Expeditionary Forces that never in history has there come out of war as clean a body of men as the Americans who served in those forces in Europe. They have set a standard for all time. "In truth [Diary] conscription has for the first time in our history given us a class of men truly representative of the nation. It is a *national* army."

A little later came the institution of vocational schools for our soldiers, and in southern France a university, "A real university [Diary], where all professions, sciences, and arts were taught, just as in the best universities anywhere, to great numbers of young American soldiers, by professors, some of whom were themselves soldiers and others civilians brought for the purpose. The university buildings were an old base hospital enlarged and equipped. The striking things in it were: First: That so great an institution could be improvised in an army in so short a time (three-and-a-half months) after warfare had ceased. Second: The great interest of the students. Third: The tremendous enthusiasm of the professors. Fourth: The real effectiveness of the institution." Owing to its system of military discipline, it was thorough.

The requirements of the time bore disproportionally hard upon higher officers—their duties were more trying than in actual hostilities. Some could not be impressed with the need of care, interest, and concern in the main-

tenance of discipline. In a short time two major generals and two brigadiers of my army failed to measure up to the requirements and lost their commands. The conditions were most straining. At the end of the winter, I write: "I am horribly listless these days. I can sleep nine hours out of the twenty-four and want more, and I cannot get up interest enough to do anything in a real live way. Still I keep going and doing."

But it was all worth while, nay, necessary, especially for my army, which had been left largely in the desolated regions of France. It especially needed occupation and amusement.

Discipline and order and the full discharge of duty in these days were made all the harder by constant rumours of changes and home-going. It is little exaggeration to say that from the first many expected to take the next train home, so to speak; and, to the end, everybody, still hoping, propagated every rumour, every suggestion of a move in that direction. Even our G. H. Q. seemed at first to have been infected with nostalgia and to have started to plan to get away at once. "At first [Diary, November 28th] it was indicated that my army would be withdrawn a bit farther into France, then that it would go farther toward the French-German border." Again (December 2d), "Almost, or quite, two weeks ago I was told that my army would move forward and help to occupy Germany and Luxembourg. We have not yet moved. One thing after another has kept the order from actual issue, and I think to the satisfaction of our general headquarters. Naturally, we should not want to sit down in that country for a long, indefinite occupation." Plainly our G. H. Q. hoped to avoid committing us to keeping a great occupy-

ing force in Europe. And this wisely; because we had not interest or concern enough in the final adjustment of Europe to justify us in keeping one.

The desire of the other Allies, British, Italian, and Portuguese, to get away from France was equally or more manifest than among the Americans. The British, especially, were falling over one another to leave. Poor France felt that she was almost being deserted before she was yet sure of peace. The Allied commander, the Frenchman, Marshal Foch, was holding the others as hard as he could. Even the 92nd Negro Division, which I was so anxious to see started homeward, was for some days held, by orders of Marshal Foch, until he was convinced that he had better let them go. Even after the movement of my own army had begun toward Luxembourg, as desired by Marshal Foch, I wrote (December 11th): "A hint comes down to me from our general headquarters not to be in any great hurry to move my army headquarters forward under the plan proposed for it to 'back up' the Third American Army on the Rhine. My army headquarters, therefore, may never move forward. If so I shall not be sorry. Our work in Europe is finished. I would like to see our army go home to our side of the world. I have recently jokingly proposed to Frenchmen to leave the Allies Mr. Wilson's fourteen articles and go home. The joke amused but the idea worried them. If those fourteen articles of President Wilson's are to be the guide in the settlement of international questions here in Europe, I can see no end to the peace negotiations." And again, "My Second Army [December 15th] is still in an undecided state. We have been warned to go forward and yet held back, ordered and counter-ordered, 'back-



ing and filling.'” Plainly our G. H. Q. hoped that we, the Americans, might somehow escape a further force of occupation in Europe.

The period of waiting brought to the minds of the highest military authorities our partial American neglect to give, at the time of the deeds, due recognition for efficiency, bravery, gallantry, and sacrifice in the war. With, or quickly following, the armistice, had come the order from our War Department to make no more promotions. Later this was modified by an order to give promotion to such men as had up to the moment of the armistice clearly earned it; and to this was added a general desire and effort to report deeds that had in the actual fighting merited decorations or citations. This had often been neglected, because brave deeds and great dangers faced in the actual fighting seem to the minds of officers and men at the time quite natural and without any special merit.

Be it said to their honour that there had therefore been and there was now no unseemly scramble by officers or men for promotions and decorations. Indeed, in our better backsight of to-day, I can see how meritorious deeds and services have been passed over without note and can never be rewarded. This was to be expected, because it is rare to find old or trained soldiers (and they are generally the commanders whose duty it is to recommend) who regard deeds of bravery, daring, or sacrifice, either in themselves or others, as anything else than duty and therefore as meriting any especial note. They are not inclined to “blow” over the deeds of themselves or their men.

I was struck by the little response I met among my higher commanders when I proposed in their commands



an organization whose function it should be to find and reward meritorious deeds and conduct. To-day, three years later, it must be a sore point to many of these old commanders to see the glorious and more numerous decorations obtained for their men by commanders whose conceptions of merit were not so high and exacting.

I was not myself among the unrewarded. Before the end of the winter I had been decorated by my own government with the Distinguished Service Medal; by the French Government with the French War Cross and the Legion of Honour (presented by Marshal Pétain); by the Belgian Government with the Order of Leopold, and later by the Italian Government with the Crosses of St. Lazarus and St. Maurice. I, of course, greatly appreciated these honours. Yet I found myself writing, "I have half-a-dozen times in my life done things daring enough to be called bravery, but having received no recognition therefor I had begun of late years to wish never to receive such a thing as a decoration. Now it has come."

A month after the armistice the French were still in a sort of prolonged celebration of their victory.

"To-day [Diary, December 8th] I accepted an invitation of the French Marshal, Pétain, to visit Metz and be present at a military review at 9:00 A. M., and afterward to dine, or rather breakfast, at his mess. I accepted, and went with two aides. The French President presented the marshal's baton to Marshal Pétain—a fine, inspiring spectacle—in the presence of many generals and high civil officials. Then a review led by an infantry battalion of my army. This battalion was surpassed by no troops in the review; they looked tremen-

dously businesslike and soldierly. The review, the baton presentation, the great crowds of civilians—Lorrainers and Alsatians—made a striking spectacle unusual to me. But of all things noted by me, the most impressive was that this people of Metz, who are supposed to have suffered so much from four years of war, appeared to be suffering nothing at all, and there were great stores and apparent plenty of happiness, food, clothes, and what-not. I was not greatly surprised, because I have long reasoned that tales of their suffering and hunger and cold, etc., which have been reaching us for four years, were exaggerations. I imagine from what I have to-day seen in this line, that Germany has had no great hardship in the war and that she can and should be made to pay *heavily* for all the destruction which she has caused in her fever of megalomania and world rule. *She should be made to pay.*

“The breakfast after the ceremony was not of special consequence. I met some French people, women and men, of importance, but did not enjoy them especially. Later Marshal Pétain appeared. At the baton presentation Marshals Foch, Joffre, and Haig were present; also our own general-in-chief, Pershing—as good as any of ’em and, in fact, better, because he has had a harder job and done it as well as any of them. I predict that he is to go higher; he will be President of the United States if he but continue to live, which he looks strong enough to do.”

“Christmas Eve! [Diary, December 24th, 1918.] Where was I the last one? No great distance away—at Gondrecourt, where I had ten days before taken command of the 1st Division. Ah, how things have changed since then! The outlook was blue, very blue, for the

Allies. To-day, however, they have won a complete victory and are now preparing a suitable and heavy punishment for their enemies. Then I commanded a single division; now seven. Yet I do not feel any more responsibility weighing upon me now than then. Then, as now, I was feeling it to the limit of my power of feeling it. I felt then that if I could command the 1st Division for six months I should have had reasonable success and would not be discontent if I lost the division. My thought was that my country, my people, the Government, our authorities, would act toward me as I have seen them sometimes act toward other commanders who had failed through no fault of their own, but through the fault, or rather the lack, of a military system. I was prepared to be sacrificed for the public's failure to have a military system. But I was not sacrificed. The public did not demand it. I do not know exactly why. Perhaps it was because the public realized how serious was the situation, perhaps because the President of the United States knew that there was no military system and smothered our failures. Certainly there were many great failures, and certainly there have been no demands for victims."

Fault-finding by our government and people at home of the Army and its commanders in France had been little, almost lacking. I was congratulating myself upon our escape. It had been most remarkable and unusual. It was not, however, to last. A little later the rumblings of discontent at home in the United States began to reach us.

"In this war [Diary February 4, 1919], the day of sacrifice and fighting has passed and, in the United States at least, the day of charges and recriminations

seems at hand. Each day brings newspaper or Congressional outbursts against something or somebody official." Some of our troops and some officers had been sent home, and malcontents among them and among their troops still in France were talking or writing. Officers here and there, who conceived that they had not received the full reward of what they deemed their own merits, were now busy venting their discontent and criticism. Most of these skilfully involved their organizations with themselves. "The 35th Division was not treated right, and the 26th Division was not treated right, etc., etc." These two divisions seemed to be objects of special public concern and talk. They were still in France, but some high-ranking officers, who had lost their places in these two divisions had returned to the United States. The inference as to who was raising the row is plain. These rumblings grew louder and continued as long as we remained in France. Indeed some of them long afterward continued. "I am inclined to think [Diary, February 21, 1919], that our G. H. Q. is a bit concerned about the threats and the talk in the United States about investigating everything that has been done in this war by Americans in Europe and, I suppose, everywhere else. Something must be done to satisfy the screamers, the hysterical, over supposed injuries." And after the war, we knew that much had been done to satisfy the screamers; but there are few "knowers" of the real facts who believe that it was done for other reasons than to quiet the screamers, not to do justice. One of the divisions, the 35th, that contained many of these malcontents, served in my army long after the armistice. I knew its complaints. I heard and



considered all the causes of its "growls" and discontent. All, or practically all, of these complaints were stirred up by two or three influential and skilfully intriguing officers, moved, one by desire for revenge for loss of his position, and the others by the hope of political influence among their fellows after the war. Before the division had left France they had so stirred up their friends at home with allegations of poor work done by the division in consequence of alleged ill-treatment of these few officers, that the division, which had done quite reasonably well in the war, practically lost completely its reputation for efficiency. The common question was, "What is the matter with the 35th Division?" In their efforts at revenge the malcontents had wounded their fellows—spoiled the good name and reputation of their own division. I had pointed this out to the higher officers of the division, generals and colonels, before this was accomplished, but the division could not be made to heed.



## CHAPTER XXXIV

### HOME

UP TO the armistice our American troops had served closely with the French and among the French people, and always on the average, in so far as was observable, in very smooth and amicable relations. In the presence of the common danger, the German, trifles of friction between themselves, if any, were overlooked. The constant movement of troops as long as actual hostilities lasted, caused a frequent change of personnel that also helped to maintain smooth relations.

After the armistice the Allies took up their "Watch on the Rhine"—the French on the upper, the Americans on the middle, and the British on the lower Rhine. Three American armies came thus to be echeloned from the Rhine back to south central France in this order: the Third Army, the Second Army, the First Army. Our troops, whether in Germany, Luxembourg, or France, were cantoned among the people in villages and cities, and were thus brought in close and constant contact with the population everywhere. Such a life, under the best conditions of living, could not fail to be straining to both citizens and soldiers.

"Little things [Diary, December 12th] are beginning to happen between American and French authorities which makes me feel that it is time for Americans to be going home. . . . Americans are asked to

give up barracks and billets and move around out of the Frenchmen's way (troops' way, I mean) and to give up the site, barracks, and buildings used as army schools, etc., etc. Americans cannot get rail transportation for movement or they get it with difficulty, from the French. Some of this is not on its face necessary." My Second Army was occupying a portion of the devastated regions from which the French population had during the war largely fled and to which they were now beginning to return. The return was premature and might well have been prohibited by the French authorities. "The French peasants [Diary, December 17th], now that war and its crises are no longer on them, seem to be having more and more time to complain of trifles in the conduct of our American soldiers."

From this time on until the end of January, 1919, my diary contains frequent references to the irritation between French and Americans. At first I thought the friction local and sporadic, but as time went on it developed in Luxembourg and came to light even in our Third Army in the occupied German territory. On their side the French seemed predisposed to irritation by the fear that the Americans, in the coming peace congress, were going to try to restrain the demands of the French on the beaten Germans. This was constantly appearing in the French press and public discussions, and the French were resentful over it.

On our side the average American soldier felt and did not after a time hesitate to show to the Frenchman that he felt himself entitled to the latter's everlasting gratitude for having come over into the war on the French side; a gratitude which he, the American, seemed to think ought to make the individual Frenchman overlook

a lot of wild American conduct, and accept with equanimity, not to say joy, the American's crowding presence in the Frenchman's home and villages, and even reduce for the American the Frenchman's price of red wine, eggs, etc. These American soldier expectations were unmet, which did not add to the good feeling between the two. From the troops and the people the irritation gradually seemed to spread up to the highest military and civil authorities, French and American.

"In places of size [Diary], such as Nancy and Metz, we are requested to stay out. . . . Certain arrangements [December 27th,] made by Marshal Foch's headquarters about circulation, mail, and passes, at the Luxembourg-German frontier have appeared too stringent or too harsh to General Pershing, and my army (the VIth Corps), now in the Duchy of Luxembourg, has not been required to put them into effect."

The irritation had become a matter of concern also to higher French and American authorities. "I enjoyed a long talk [January 17, 1919] at supper with Marshal Pétain, whom I had met many times when I was commanding during active operations. He seemed especially pleased to hear that I had always got along well with the French. I imagine that he has recently been hearing of some little friction here and there between French and Americans. In fact, he asked me very particularly about my own relations with the different French commanders under or near whom I had served."

Immediately after this conversation with Marshal Pétain I had to go to Luxembourg to satisfy some doubts of staff officers of our G. H. Q., "on the subject [Diary] of the French, on whom some of our G. H. Q. staff officers have from the first looked with great sus-

picion or dislike. In this especial case the fear was that in some way our troops or our commanders might be made catspaws by the French (in French efforts to induce Luxembourg to come into the French Republic). When I reached Luxembourg I found that no such thing had happened, and so reported to our G. H. Q."

The most straining incident of it all: "Recently [Diary] some of our troops lacked firewood [it was mid-winter] and an American officer (of poor judgment, it must be admitted) authorized soldiers to cut dead trees for fuel. In so doing, the farm or grounds belonging to the President of France lost some dead trees. A complaint thereof from the President followed, and the local American officers, a lieutenant colonel and the major general commanding the division, lost their commands—of course, by American order; in fact, by my request as the incident occurred in my army."

I think that the President afterward felt that he had "made a mountain out of a mole-hill" in this matter and was ashamed; at least, an indirect but official intimation came to me of his regret at the action taken upon his complaint. I am bound to say that I felt that the complaint was unworthy: that I, too, with many other American soldiers, felt that many of the French were hysterical over trifles of annoyance that the presence of Americans was causing them.

These conditions of irritation from the first had caused me much concern, and I had instituted measures to try to improve French-American relations in my army. I had ordered my commanders everywhere to give the closest and most prompt attention to prevent or correct irritation and misunderstanding. They and I made visits of duty and politeness to French military



and civil officers over the whole region occupied by my army. Quickly the beneficial effects of these efforts and visits became manifest, and better relations were soon developing. By the end of January Franco-American irritation where I had seen it had passed away. We were good friends. The irritation had been temporary.

After a long winter of sticking closely to the work of holding our soldiers to duty and discipline, and while the Peace Conference was wrangling and governments were in scholastic doubt about whether the war was over, I was accidentally called for a short time entirely away from military surroundings, war talk, and war duties. Then I at once realized that, whether the Peace Conference should talk on for ever, whether the ultimate boundary should be upon the Rhine or beyond, whether there was a league of nations or no league of nations, whether we should have a peace treaty or no peace treaty—the war was over.

I was so impressed with this idea that soon after my return to my army I was ready to say and did say to our G. H. Q. that it might break up my army as fast as it pleased without hurting my feelings, that I felt the war was over and that I was ready to go home.

“Our G. H. Q. cautioned me [Diary, April 7, 1919] to keep my army headquarters in condition to function (I had for some ten days or two weeks been slowly reducing it). On the 5th of April, however, came the final order discontinuing the Second Army at noon April 15th. . . . It was time. The thing is ended; I have long felt it. . . . The affairs of this war and the settlement of Europe are no longer of any special interest to me.



"I yesterday called together the chiefs of staff and heads of service and communicated to them their last instructions as to the break-up. All were looking for this and there remained but little to do.

. . . . .

"The thing that characterized the Second Army was harmony, resulting in loyalty. There were no dissensions. The army, located in regions devastated by the war has always been uncomfortable and has had some difficulty in preserving good relations with the French citizens in these regions, who have been rendered almost hysterical by their losses and sufferings. Yet good relations have been preserved. Our own careless, or, rather, extravagant soldiers, who cut trees and are used to good fires, caused a good deal of fretting among the French by the way they burned old lumber and cut trees. Hard punishment and discipline brought all this to an end among our troops.

"To-day [Diary, April 10th] General Pershing comes to inspect the remnants of my army before that army ceases to exist. He has been doing the like for all organizations returning to the United States. He is doing his best to have them quit with a good taste in their mouths. If he succeeds therein, the lack-scandal and lack-discontent of this war as compared with all others will make him one of the most successful Americans and will probably or would probably, make him president if he but had a little more mixing ability. He inspires no enthusiasm ever. Respect? Yes; but respect does not generally elect a president."

About this time General Pershing caused to be done one of the wisest things that were done in the war.

Newspaper correspondents and writers of all classes were gathered up and sent, under officers who knew the facts and the reasons why of everything that had been done in France, to visit and be shown all the battlefields and indeed the whole theatre of operations of the American Expeditionary Forces in France and of its service after the armistice. All of our operations, and the conditions and causes which produced them, were explained and shown. They learned the facts, the whys and wherefores of everything. Probably no greater silencer of scandal and falsehood could ever have been thought of. Millions of lies and false criticisms were probably thereby avoided.

The remainder of my memories in France is not of the war, but of visits to war-famed places and peoples and of good-byes to organizations and comrades with whom I had fought and worked, not omitting my comrades of the French, Generals Passaga, Vandenburg, Gérard, Hirschauer, and Mangin, all happy and proud, as victors, keeping their "Watch on the Rhine" in re-conquered Alsace-Lorraine; and Generals Debeney, Daugan, Degoutte, Monroe and others, resting after their labours and struggles, in the heart of their beloved France. I felt them my comrades as truly as I so felt any American.

During the whole time of my stay in France, I heretofore had had to stick so closely to my places of duty that I had seen nothing else than those places. My own work done, I went now to see a few other places.

My tour ended with my arrival, May 10th, at our great camp at Brest, France. This camp had been established hurriedly for the evacuation from France to the United States of the great personnel of the A. E. F.

But a little while ago it had been bitterly criticized by passing troops for its discomforts and inconveniences. These criticisms caused a great hubbub both at home and in France, in which latter place there was much apparent official denial. From my visit and talk with its present commanding officer, General Helmick, an old friend of mine, "I conclude [Diary] that the conditions were once bad here and that there was ground for criticism and complaint. Helmick was commanding here at the time but had not been long so commanding. Certainly now there seems no ground for complaint or criticism. . . .

"General Helmick is of the opinion, derived from observation and talk with passing American troops, that . . . U. S. troops generally disliked the French people and preferred the Germans. I believe that his observation is superficial, and that his conclusion was greatly coloured by his personal dislike of the French, which is quite manifest and which seems largely due to his inability to communicate with them except by an interpreter. Community of language is a wonderful smother of relations.

U. S. Transport *Kaiserin Augusta Victoria*,  
off Brest, May 14, 1919.

Just twenty-three months ago to-day I sailed from New York for France: to-day I sail from France for New York. . . . Dined yesterday with Mr. Julius Kahn, an old acquaintance and friend, member of Congress and chairman of the House Military Committee, who is visiting our A. E. F. throughout. I was struck by his impression that our official relations here in France with the French had become bad, such not

being my impression or experience at all. He had apparently arrived at the conclusion by association with our A. E. F. staff officers one of whom accompanied him.

. . . . .

As I moved out of the port of Brest and saw the great German steamships that we had seized or hired for our troop shipments to the United States, greater than any others, French, English, or American, I could not help thinking that if the Germans were doing things on so large a scale before their world victory, what would they have done after it! They were near ruling the earth! . . .

"I am finding that I love to loiter and chat with persons aboard. They come from everywhere in our A. E. F. and can give me good, just impressions of the general morale and state of mind in the A. E. F. at the end of its activities. Thus far my impression is that almost all officers and men are quitting with a good taste in the mouth. . . .

"From him [a general staff officer charged with such affairs] I hear that there seems some tendency to discuss and discuss, and differ and differ, insist and insist, each one from his point of view, among those who are now trying to crystallize into regulations and manuals our recent war lessons and experiences. Little will thus result to us from all our valuable experience if this goes on. On account of separation, our home authorities and our A. E. F. authorities cannot 'get together,' may seriously differ; and if so there will be no progress, or but little. In organization and methods there may result great differences of view between those who during the war directed at home and those

who directed in Europe. I trust that the supreme authority will decide without too much discussion (discussion embitters) and put something into effect, remembering that where there are differences of opinion as to methods of organization tried, both are likely to be right and practicable, neither exclusively so.

As an officer of the field not of the desk or office, I think I shall try to see the Secretary of War and urge upon him the need of not allowing needless discussion and indecision to deprive us of the fruits of our war experience in the making of our official regulations and the manuals for the future guidance and profit of the army. Boards and committees, official ones, on account of too much public and general counsel-taking, rarely have helped to fix our army custom and regulation; but some individuals, as Wagner, Bond, and Mac-Donough, and many others by writing out and publishing, without consultation with others, their own views and methods in military matters, have helped to fix correctly our instruction and discipline more than boards and committees. Too much discussion, too much consultation, raises questions of doubt and differences that prevent general acceptance of anything even when it is officially prescribed."

The end of May, 1919, found me at home—a little short of two years since I had left it for the war.





## INDEX



# INDEX

- Abaucourt, taken in the attack of the Second Army, 304
- Addams, Miss Jane, horrified at use of liquor by troops, 183
- Airplanes, damage by bombing not as great as feared, 188; in the Meuse-Argonne offensive, 274, 278
- America, slow to realize seriousness of the war, 73, 82; "entered the war too late," 86, 87
- American Army, lack of organization at time of mobilization on Mexican border, 5; first contingent goes to France, 32 ff.
- American Expeditionary Force, organization in France, 73 ff.
- American Red Cross, gives funds to General Pétain to aid in restoring morale of French army, 71
- Americans never haters in war, 117
- Armistice, comes during attack of the Second Army, 303; events leading up to it, and the final peace, 307 ff.
- Army regulations, should be compiled from experiences in the war, 337
- Artillery, the French high regard for, 233; an unusual amount demanded in the Meuse-Argonne offensive, 275
- Austria, after Italian defeat more closely drawn to Germany, 89; rumours of armistice with Italy, 310
- Badoglio, General, assured by Marshal Foch just previous to the Armistice that there would be four months more of fighting, 309
- Baker, Secretary of War, at embarkation of first troops at Hoboken, 29; in France, 30;
- Balloons, observation, destroyed by enemy airplanes, 279
- Ballou, General, commanding the 92nd Division, in the attack of the Second Army, 303
- Barbed wire, difficulties in surmounting, 265, 269
- Bell, Gen. George commanding 33rd Division in Meuse-Argonne offensive, 267, 268; in the attack on the Hindenburg Line, 303, 304
- Belleau Wood, victory won by 2nd Division, not solely by the Marines, 208
- Berdoulat, General, at the battle of Soissons, 216
- Big guns, bombardment of Coulange forces removal of IIIrd Corps headquarters, 232
- Billeting, upon the French inhabitants, 53, 104, 107; of great advantage to European armies, 128
- Bliss, Gen. Tasker H., Acting Chief of Staff at outbreak of the war, 20 ff.
- Blondlat, General, French officer with American Second Army, 289
- Bois de Fay, difficulties of the 4th Division in holding, 273
- Bois des Ogons, captured, after three attempts by 80th Division, 275, 276
- Bois Dommartin, taken in the attack of the Second Army, 304
- Bombing, by enemy airplanes, 188; the fear engendered, 225, 226
- Brag and boast, hurtful to Americans at beginning of the war, 83, 85
- Brest, the great evacuation camp, 334
- British, Fifth Army annihilated, 171, and American 1st Division departs to help fill the gap, 177; fighting "with their backs to the wall," 179, 184; discipline enabled them to fight on after France had ceased, 241; in hurry to leave France, after the Armistice, 321
- Bullard, General, on the Mexican border in 1916, 1; in the Geronimo campaign, 8; under Gen. Leonard Wood in the Philippines, 9; detailed to officers' training camp, 8, 15; ordered to France with first contingent of American troops, 18; appointed major general and assigned to 1st Division, 25; at Hoboken awaiting embarkation, 26; en voyage, 32; at St. Nazaire in cantonment, 38; at Gondrecourt, 53; at head of all training schools, 60, 66; attends French officers' *Lycée*, 70; at G. H. Q. at Chaumont, 74; sent to French front to observe battle conditions, 93; given command of the 1st Division, 92, 93, 95; with the French in Lorraine, 115; inaugurates a hate-making campaign against the Germans, 116; overcomes hostility of General Debeney, 121; to the front, 126, in the trenches, 137;

- begins offensive tactics, 141; "jumps" hospital to join his command at the front, 177; living in dugouts, 187; at Cantigny, 192; on the Château-Thierry salient, 202; ignores the French order to fall back, 206; given command of IVth Corps, which failed to materialize, 210; ordered to take command of IIIRD Corps, 213; at battle of Soissons, 213; health impaired from hard campaign, 223, 232; beyond the Vesle, 246; with his corps joins American First Army under Pershing, 258; at Souilly and Rampont, 259; the Meuse-Argonne, 264; appointed to command of Second Army, 279; appointed lieutenant general, 290; ordered to attack with whole army, 296, 299; the Armistice stops the fighting, 303; keeping discipline after the Armistice, 316; decorated by his own government as well as by France, Belgium, and Italy, 323; makes tour of France, ending at Brest, where he sails for home, 334
- Bureaus, importance of, in the estimation of the French, 69
- Camouflage, a military bad habit, 162
- Cantigny, captured by the Americans, 192 ff.
- Casualties, American, in the Meshil-St. Firmin sector, 194; at Cantigny, 197; at Fismette, 235
- Cavalry, useless at battle of Soissons, owing to delayed start, 219
- Cave dwellings and wine cellars of France, 187
- Cellars, only safe part of villages under fire, 187
- Chamberlain, Senator, asserts that "The War Department has ceased to function," 25, 73, 82
- Changing of orders, a weakness of the French, 128, 206, 229
- Charline, location of IIIRD Corps on the Marne, 225
- Charleston, cruiser convoying first troops to France, 32
- Château-Thierry, salient driven in by Germans, 202
- Chaumont, General Pershing's headquarters, 74
- Chemin des Dames, the German offensive of 1918, 202 ff.
- Children, made much of by American soldier in France, 56
- Citation for bravery, delivered by airplane to besieged 4th Division in the Bois de Fay, 274
- Clemenceau, visits Americans in the trenches, 154; courageous in the great German offensive, 172
- Combat record of French troops during last year of the war, from General Mangin's book, 72 *note*
- "Cooties," Americans in contact with, 105; in the trenches, 162
- Coulange, headquarters of IIIRD Corps, 231-233
- Criminals, in the American armies, 252
- Cronkhite, General, commanding 80th Division in Meuse-Argonne offensive, 267; captures the Bois des Ogons in the third attempt, 275, 276
- Daugan, General, commander of the famous Moroccan division, 136
- Davis, Gen. George W., makes good use of Pershing in the Philippines, 44, 45
- De Castelnau, General, places great importance on training a staff, 68; visits Americans in training sector, 105
- Dead beats, stragglers, and deserters, 251
- Debeney, General, his hostility to Americans overcome by General Bullard, 120; commander of French army to which 1st Division is attached, 120, 129; states great German offensive has begun, 171; his army halts Germans after English give way, 178, 182; in command of French army with which 1st Division was to fight, 182
- Decorations, awarded American troops for gallantry, 196; no scramble for, after the war, 322
- Defeatism, in the American army, 32; in the French army and government, 79; Peace the one great topic in *Le Matin*, 84
- Degoutte, General, in command of the French Sixth Army, 212; in command of the Sixth Army containing American troops, 229; orders return of American troops to Fismette where they are wiped out by German attack, 236; orders attack by IIIRD Corps, 253
- Democracy against autocracy, President Wilson's definition of the war struggle, 119
- Deserters, stragglers, and dead beats, 251
- Destruction by the Germans in the St. Mihiel salient, 286
- Dinners to American officers at French headquarters add to official good feeling, 138
- Discipline, in the trenches, 161; a strength to the British, lack of it a weakness to the French, 241; necessity of maintaining, after the Armistice, 316 ff.
- Duncan, General, tells Pershing that he is spoiling a good field officer by keeping General Bullard on the training schools, 93



- Eightieth Division, captures the Bois des Ogons on the third attempt, 275, 276; in the Meuse-Argonne offensive, 267, 268, 269; at Montfaucon, 278
- Faultfindings and recriminations after the war, 325
- Fayolle, General, commanding a French corps on the Mesnil-St. Firmin sector, 199
- Fifth Corps, in the Meuse-Argonne battle, 273
- Firewood, burning of, cause of irritation between French and Americans, 55, 331
- First Division, confusion at embarkation at Hoboken, 26; the voyage to France, 32 ff.; in cantonnement at St. Nazaire, 38; moved nearer to the front, 50; in billets at Gondrecourt, 53; three months' service in a French army, 76; rifle practice at Gondrecourt, 102; instruction in use of gas masks, 103; training continued in winter despite privation, 107; officers the best available, 108; their record at Soissons, 114; ordered placed in the front line, 115; under the French in Lorraine, 115 ff.; the end of his training period, 123; into the line of battle, 126 ff.; life in the trenches, 153 ff.; best equipped, officered, and prepared, 164; yet found lacking, 165; leaves the trenches for the northwest battle front, 174, 177 ff.; with the French army under General Micheler, 179; "digging in", 184; combat headquarters at Mesnil-St. Firmin, 186 ff.; at Cantigny, 192 ff.; holds the line at Montdidier, 206; leaves for the Château-Thierry salient, 210, 213; General Bullard is called to command an army corps and is succeeded by General Summerall, 211.; at the battle of Soissons, 218, 221; in the Meuse-Argonne offensive, 267
- Fiske, Major Harold B., his work with training schools, 61
- Fismette, loss of American troops at, due to change of orders by French army commander, 235 ff.
- Flies, a dangerous pest, 223, 232
- Flirey, held by the Germans and continuously bombarded by the French, 134
- Foch, Marshal, admired by his people, 72; sends from Italy his message of fight, 90; did not trap the Germans in Château-Thierry salient, 222; just previous to the Armistice assures Italian general that there would be four months more of fighting, 309; at ceremony of presentation of baton to Marshal Pétain, 324
- Forêt de Villers-Cotterets, American position in the battle of Soissons, 213, 214, 215, 216, 221
- Fourth Division, in the Meuse-Argonne offensive, 267, 268, 269, 273; magnificent work and wonderful courage in taking and holding the Bois de Fay, 274
- Fraternization, after the Armistice, 305, 313
- French, their demoralization and depression, 79; their hope that the American troops would be used to recruit their armies, 93; criticism of Pershing, 94; their desire to break up and control American troops, 165
- French people, welcome Americans at St. Nazaire, 47; and at Nantes, 48; their impressions of America's entrance into the war, 48; soldiers and civilians well kept and well fed, 50; thrifty and hard working, 51; welcome Americans billeted upon them, 53; resent too liberal use of wood as fuel by the Americans, 55, 331; cordial relations with American soldiers, 56
- French socialists, moving against the French army, 89
- Fresnes, headquarters of the IIIrd Corps, 234, 247
- Friction between French and Americans, 227, 244; after the Armistice, 329, 335
- Frightfulness, against frightfulness, 118; begins to abate with the German retreat, 246
- Fuel, scarcity of, French people resent tree cutting by Americans, 55, 331
- Gas, instruction in protection, 103; precautions against frequent attacks, 158; feared also by German troops, 159; a tremendous infliction, 193
- General Staff, its condition at beginning of the war, 26
- Gerest, Father Regis, a friend of days in Cuba, met again in France, 56
- German propaganda, cause of Italian defeat, 89
- Germans, instigating in Mexico hostilities against the United States, 1; selection of military positions in France before the war, 132; their 1918 peace offensive, 167; recognize Americans as formidable after Cantigny, 199; disorganization of army at time of the Armistice, 314
- Germans, in American army, many segregated on suspicion, 32
- Gibercy, captured in the attack of the Second Army, 304
- Gisors, location of 1st Division preparatory to attack, 177
- Gondrecourt, the 1st Division billeted at, 53; first training school established at, 63; rifle practice of the 1st Division, at, 102

- Great Headquarters, established by General Pershing at Chaumont, 74
- Grimaucourt, taken in the attack of the Second Army, 304
- Haig, Marshal, entreated by Pétain to draw Germans to British front on account of low morale of French troops, 71; at ceremony of presentation of baton to Marshal Pétain, 324
- Hand grenades, preferred over rifles by the French, 102
- Harbord, Gen. James G., commander of 2nd Division at battle of Soissons, 217; in the Philippines, 217
- Harts, General, his work with the army deserters and criminals, 252
- Hate-making campaign against the Germans, 116 ff.
- Hay, General, commanding the 28th Division, 303
- Helmick, General, in charge of Brest evacuation camp, 335
- Hines, Gen. J. L., commanding the 4th Division in the Meuse-Argonne offensive, 267, 268, 269; holds the Bois de Fay under great difficulties, 274; given command of 111rd Corps, 279
- Hirschauer, General, in command of French Second Army, near Verdun, 259
- Home, preparations for the return of the troops, 328 ff.
- House, Colonel E. M., his great talk commission, 85; statement that at time of the Armistice, General Pershing was alone in wish to continue the war, 315
- Ill feeling between the French and Americans and its cause, 227, 244, 329, 335
- Infantry organization of Americans not adapted to conditions in France, 106
- Italy, her defeat a tremendous setback to the Allies, 86-91; her position in the German offensive of 1917-1918, 171; defeat of October, 1917, cause of great depression in France, 239
- Joffre, Marshal, entreats America to rush troops to restore French morale, 80; visits Americans in training sector, 105; at ceremony of presentation of baton to Marshal Pétain, 324
- Kahn, Congressman Julius, his impression of uncordial relations between the French and Americans, 335
- Kitchens, operated continuously along the road of supply in the Meuse-Argonne battle, 272
- Labour battalions, formed for road construction, 157; repair roads destroyed in battle, 231
- Labour troubles, a disgrace to the unions during the war, 18
- Langres Staff College, established for the A. E. F., 62, 66, 90
- Lassiter, Major-General, Artillery chief of staff of Second Army, 283, 288
- Lea, Col. Luke, attempts to kidnap the Kaiser, 312
- Le Matin*, peace the one great topic, 84
- Lessons of the war, should be profited by, 337
- Liaison officers of great help to the American forces, 121ff.
- Liggett, Gen. Hunter, commander of 1st American Corps, and later the First Army in the Meuse-Argonne, 143-145
- Ligny-en-Barrois, headquarters of General Pershing and the American First Army, 258
- Liquor, its use by the English and French—and Americans, 183
- Lloyd George, agrees to furnish ships for transport of large American army, 205
- Local attacks, attain no direct result, 272, 275
- "Lost Battalion," of the 77th Division, 250
- Machine guns, the most deadly arm developed by the war, 244; the enemy's main defense in the Meuse-Argonne battle, 269
- Malone, Col. Paul, in charge of establishing training schools for the A. E. F., 62
- Mangin, General, excerpt from his book showing French combat record for last year of the war, 72 *note*; prepares for the last great offensive, 136; an aggressive fighter, 199 ff.; in the battle of Soissons, 215
- Manure piles, in the French dooryards, repulsive to Americans, 54
- March, General Peyton C., becomes Chief of Staff at Washington and ends the conditions of promise and disappointment, 73, 86
- Marcheville, taken in the attack of the Second Army, 304
- Marines, in first troop movement to France, 32; get the glory due the entire 2nd Division for victory of Belleau Wood, 208
- Marriages of American soldiers to French women largely the result of billeting, 54
- McAlexander, Colonel, immortalizes his regiment of 3rd Division at Château-Thierry, 210, 212
- McAndrew, Col. James, his work with training schools, 61, 66
- Mesnil-St. Firmin, combat headquarters of the 1st Division, 186 ff.

- Meuse-Argonne, American offensive, 264 ff.
- Mexican border mobilization, not a threat against Germany, 3; lessons taught in developing an American army, 3 ff.
- Micheler, General, commander of French army with which 1st Division was temporarily connected, 179
- Military police, necessary for holding men to duty, 267
- Minenwerfers, use by the Germans, 160, 168
- Mont St. Père, headquarters of IIIrd Corps on the Marne, 225, 231
- Monte Verde, General, met first in Cuba, again as a visitor to the battle line, 248
- Montfaucon, headquarters of the Crown Prince, captured by 3rd Division, 278
- Montsec, German position overlooking American battle line, 133
- Montzeville General Bullard's headquarters during the battle of Meuse-Argonne, 270
- Morale, of the French, at time of America's entrance into the war, 70; the autumn of 1917 a period of great depression in France, 78 ff.; Joffre entreats America to rush troops for its effect on the French, 80; defeat of Italians a setback to the Allies, 86-91; the French without offensive spirit, 98; French and English encouraged by American success at Cantigny, 197; low spirits of Allies after the German onslaught at Chemin des Dames, 204; the great depression in France after the Italian defeat and Russian defection, 239 ff.
- Morality of American troops, 319
- Moroccan division, one of the best of the French fighting divisions, 136; at the battle of Soissons, 216, 218
- Morte Fontaine, village near IIIrd Corps Headquarters, 224
- National Guard, mobilization on Mexican border, 1; good behaviour of the troops, 3 ff.
- Negroes as soldiers, the failure of the 92d Division, 291 ff.; in the labour battalions, 157; two American regiments in the French Second Army, 260; the 92nd Division gains much ground in attack of the Second Army, 303
- Nevil, General, with his corps relieves the IIIrd Corps on the Vesle, 256
- Ninety-second Division, the Negro a failure as a soldier, 291 ff.; gains much ground in the attack of the Second Army, 303
- Nivelle, General, succeeded by General Petain, 71
- No Man's Land, patrolling and raiding, 146 ff.
- Officers, their failure in France, 97; only the fit survived the training, 109; specially selected for the 1st Division, 164; proving failures under battle conditions, 266
- Officers' training camps, idea originated by Gen. Leonard Wood, 8, 14; system adopted by War Department on outbreak of war, 15
- O'Ryan, General, good discipline of his New York troops on the Mexican border, 4.
- Painlevé, visits Americans in training, 105
- Paris, threatened by the German onslaught at Chemin des Dames, 203
- Parker, Gen. Frank, commander of American division that entered Sedan ahead of the French, 114
- Passaga, General, an aggressive French officer, 289
- Patrolling and raiding in No Man's Land, 146 ff.; experience being gained, 193
- Peace offensive, of 1918, 167
- Peace terms, early proposals, 85
- Pershing, General, at head of punitive expedition into Mexico, 1; departs for Europe with his staff, 25; at West Point, 41; in Cuba and the Philippines, 43; in charge of punitive expedition into Mexico, 46; sends battalion of American troops to 4th of July parade in Paris, 47; induces American Red Cross to aid in reestablishing morale of French army, 71; mistakenly thought a pacifist, 91; criticized by the French for withholding his troops until prepared, 94; urges optimism, 9; refers to President Wilson as model optimist, 99; advocates open warfare over trench fighting, 101; inspects American troops in training sector, 105; consults with General Debeney, commander of French army to which 1st Division is attached, 120; insists on retaining hold of American troops greatly desired by the French, 140; insists in keeping control of American troops from the French and English, 166; gives over to General Pétain temporary control of all American troops during great German offensive, 173; comment on bad reports of the 1st Division, 175; his message to 1st Division on sending them into battle, 181; compliments 1st Division on its work on Mesnil-St. Firmin sector, 195; and confers decorations, 196; at capture of Cantigny, 197; resents patronizing attitude of English and French, 198; induces British to furnish transport for large troop movement from America, 204; irritated at General Degoutte's countermand of General Bullard's order, through which Americans are lost at Fismette, 238; his headquarters at Ligny-

- en-Barrois, 258; checks up his armies and positions on eve of Meuse-Argonne attack, 267; orders the different brigade headquarters moved nearer the front in Meuse-Argonne battle, 276; gives up direct command of an army, owing to greater interests, 283; at time of Armistice, contrary to opinions of premiers of England, France, and Italy, was for continuing the war, 315; impresses upon his commanders the necessity of work and discipline after the Armistice, 317; at ceremony of presentation of baton to Marshal Pétain, 324; inspects the armies before the break up for home, 333; sends a party of newspaper correspondents over battlefields, 334
- Pétain, General, succeeds in reëstablishing morale of the French, 71; visits Americans in training sector, 105; receives from Pershing temporary control of all American troops during great German offensive, 173; visits General Bullard's headquarters at Rampont, 263; invites General Bullard to visit Metz, 323; marshal's baton presented to, 324
- Plattsburg Training School, originated by Gen. Leonard Wood, 8, 14; system adopted by the War Department and other schools established, 15
- Pro-Germanism in the American army, 32
- Promotions and decorations, no scramble for, after the war, 322
- Quartermaster Department, its inefficiency in France, 81
- Raiding in No Man's Land, 146 ff.; experience being gained, 193
- Railroads, constructed by the Americans to supply the front line, 156
- Rampont, General Bullard's headquarters, 260
- Rifle practice at Gondrecourt, 102
- Road building, American *versus* French, 231; to supply the American front line, 156
- Road repair, under great difficulties during battle of Meuse-Argonne, 271
- Roosevelt, Quentin, his grave near Coulange, 233
- Roosevelt, Theodore, his friendship for Pershing, 43
- Rumania, assured American protection by President Wilson, 85
- Russia, her defection a serious blow to the Allies, 78; proceeding toward a separate peace, 115; her defection causes great depression in France, 239
- "Sacred Road," that saved Verdun, 259
- St. Hilaire, taken in the attack of the Second Army, 304
- St. Mihiel salient, the country devastated by the Germans, 286
- St. Nazaire, the cantonment of the 1st Division, 38
- Salvage, a military bad habit, 162
- San Jacinto, confusion in loading of troops and supplies, 27
- Sanitary arrangements, importance of, in the trenches, 160
- Schools, started in France for training in all branches, 59 ff.
- Secheresse Lient. Henri, liaison officer on General Bullard's staff, 122; with General Bullard at battle of Soissons, 223; wounded near Montfaucon, 265
- Second Army, its organization, etc., 282 ff.; its attack on the eve of the Armistice, 299 ff.
- Second Division, its victory at Belleau Wood, wrongly credited to the Marines, 208; in the battle of Soissons, 215, 221
- Sedan, entered by American division ahead of the French, 114
- Seicheprey, a scene of frequent German attack, 134; Americans repulse German trench raid, 142
- Service of Supply, the American line of communication in France, 76
- Seventh Division, in the attack of the Second Army, 303
- Seventy-Ninth Division, in the Meuse-Argonne battle, 273; at Montfaucon, 277
- Seventy-Seventh Division, enters the battle line, 230; its penchant for getting lost, 249; to the north of the Vesle, 252; goes beyond the enemy's lines, 253
- Shopkeepers, in raising of prices in France offend the Americans, 57
- Sibert, General, in command of 1st Division, at the embarkation at Hoboken, 28; succeeded by General Bullard as commander of the 1st Division, 95
- Smith, "Hard Boiled," his work with the deserters and criminals, 252
- Sniping, a constant nerve strain in the trenches, 163
- Soissons, record of General Summerall's division, 114; the battle that started the German retreat, 212 ff.
- Souilly, General Bullard's headquarters, 259; a mighty cantonment, 260
- Stragglers, dead beats, and deserters, 251
- Strikes and labour troubles a disgrace to Union labour during the War, 18
- Subterranean passages and dugouts, as headquarters, 187



- Summerall, Gen. Charles P., his great record in the Philippines and in France, 110 ff.; attempts to convince the French commander that his worn-out horses are fit for service, 180, 182; succeeds General Bullard as commander of 1st Division, 211; with the 1st Division, held in reserve in Meuse-Argonne offensive, 267
- System of Supply, its machinery completed, 116
- Taft, William H., declares General Bullard refused to fall back with the French at Montdidier, 207
- Taille-Fontaine, General Bullard's headquarters at battle of Soissons, 217
- Tanks, used, but not supported by the infantry, in the Meuse-Argonne offensive, 276
- Third Army, organized and sent into Germany after the Armistice, 305
- Third Corps, under General Bullard's command, at battle of Soissons, 213 ff.; after "rest" near Morte Fontaine moves to Charline, 225; headquarters moved to Coulange, 231, 233; headquarters removed to Fresnes, 234; ordered, without sufficient preparation, to attack, 253; at Souilly, 259; at Rampont, 260; in the Meuse-Argonne offensive, 264; headquarters at Montzeville, 270
- Third Division at Montfaucon, 278
- Thirty-Eighth U. S. Infantry, immortalized at Château-Thierry, 210, 212
- Thirty-Fifth Division, complaints of its malcontents, 326
- Thirty-Third Division in the Meuse-Argonne offensive, 267, 268, 269; detached from IIIrd Corps and joined to a French corps, 277; on the Hindenburg Line, 303, 304
- Torres, Tomas, saves the life of Gen. Leonard Wood, 13.
- Training, in the schools of France, 59 ff.
- Training camps, organized by General Leonard Wood, 8 ff.
- Transportation and road repair during the Meuse-Argonne offensive, 271; in the devastated St. Mihiel salient, 287
- Trees, cutting of, by Americans for fire building results in friction with the French people, 55, 331
- Trench digging, not relished by Americans, 158, 160; in the new sector, 184
- Trench fighting *versus* open warfare a difference in opinion between the French and the Americans, 98, 101 ff.
- Trench life of the 1st Division, 153 ff.
- Twenty-Eighth Division, with the IIIrd Corps beyond the Vesle, 249; in the attack of the Second Army, 303
- Twenty-Eighth Infantry, honoured for capture of Cantigny, 199
- Twenty-Sixth Division, suffers serious mishap at Seicheprey, 135, 143; relieves the 1st Division in the trenches and finds much fault, 174
- Twenty-Sixth U. S. Infantry, at battle of Soissons loses every staff officer and its colonel, 221
- Union labour, assumes bullying and unpatriotic attitude during the war, 18
- University, instituted in France for American soldiers, 319
- Vandenburg, General, commander of French corps, and under whom 1st Division fought, 182; compliments Americans on their ability to capture prisoners, 193
- Verdun and the "Sacred Road," 259
- Villers-Cotterets, forest of American position in the battle of Soissons, 213, 214, 215, 216, 221
- Villers-Tournelle, many Americans in village suffer from gas attack, 193
- Visitors to the trenches—sightseeing Americans, 153 ff.
- Vocational schools for our soldiers instituted in France, 319
- Von Hutier tactics, threat of, on the French front, 168
- War Department, conditions at the beginning of the war, 20 ff.
- "War Department has ceased to function," statement of chairman of Senate Military Committee, 25, 73, 82
- Wilhelm, Kaiser, his attempted kidnapping by Col. Luke Lea, 312
- Wilson, President, mobilization of army on Mexican border not preparation for war with Germany, 3; dragged into the war by the people, 49; assures protection to Rumania, 85; his prevention of preparation for war responsible for slowness in reaching the front, 87; a model optimist, 99; Democracy against autocracy, his definition of the war struggle, 119
- Wine cellars and cave dwellings of France, 187
- Wittenmeyer, General, commanding the 7th Division in the Second Army, 303
- Wolfskin coat, a life saver, 178, 187
- Wood, Gen. Leonard, originator of the training camp idea, 8; his Indian campaigns and his work in Cuba and the Philippines, 8 ff.; establishes idea of Plattsburg Training School, 14











[illegible]



FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY



3 1254 00323 8306



WITHDRAWN F.S.U.

USE IN THE LIBRARY ONLY

